

JIGNASA AUR SAMADHAN

(Enquiry And Answers)

By

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CONTENTS

	Page Nos.
Chapter 1 -----	1
Chapter 2 -----	5
Chapter 3 & 4 -----	16
Chapter 5 -----	25
Chapter 6 -----	33
Chapter 7 -----	37
Chapter 8 -----	41
Chapter 9 -----	45
Chapter 10 -----	49
Chapter 11 -----	52
Chapter 12 -----	56
Chapter 13 -----	62
Chapter 14 -----	66
Chapter 15 -----	71
Chapter 16 -----	76
Chapter 17 -----	77

Jignasa Aur Samadhan
(Enquiries And Explanations)

By
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: 1 :

Jignasa: What is Satsang?

Samadhan: Satsang means that, which is the *sat vastu* – the object that is an eternal truth that can never be negated – the Satya that you should keep close to. *Sanga* means, to be with. It means to keep the company of that, which is a form of the Parameshwara. If it is the form of the Atma, you should establish your Self in it. And, if it is not known, you should obtain *gnaana* (knowledge) about it. Sang of the Sat is called Satsang.

The Gita explains the word 'Sat'.

*Om tatsaditi nirde`sho brahmanastrividhah smritah,
sadbhaave`saadhubhaave`cha sadye`tatprayujyate`.*

(Gita 17. 23)

(Om, tat and sat are the three types of the name of the Sat-Chit-Anand Brahman; the Brahman that is pure existence, pure consciousness and pure bliss. It is the Brahman who created the Brahmins, and the Yagna, etc since the beginning of time.)

The real *sattaa* (pure existence) is *akhanda* (cannot be fragmented), *abaadhyaa* (cannot be negated), and the form of the Atma. It is called Sat. That means, Sat is that, which cannot be established as being false, cannot be established as *mithyaa* (something transitory; a relative truth), which cannot be given up, and can never be negated.

Now, see – what is the object that has these qualities? Some people have negated the *sansaara* (interactive world) saying that it does not exist. Some

people even went so far as to say that there is no Ishwara. However, nobody born – in the past, present, or future – can ever think, ‘I don’t exist.’ A person who says or thinks this exists, and that is the Sat. So, if someone thinks, ‘I don’t exist’ it is only self-delusion. The fact is he exists. Therefore, what is the Sat? The Sat is our Atma.

People don’t really know how big the Atma is, what it is like, or what it is. A few do know, but they are very few. Some people believe themselves to be a body of flesh, bones and skin. Some people feel that are of a particular *jaata* (community; group), or a particular *sampradaaya* (religious sect). Some people identify with a State, some feel they are a Brahmin, a Kshatriya (of the warrior class), a *Grihastha* (householder), or a *sannyasee* (Monk). Some believe themselves to be a *vidvaana* (learned person) – *buddhimaana* (very intelligent), or a *tapasvi* (ascetic) – *samaadhistha* (immersed in a Samadhi).

However, the Atma that is the actual *svaroopa* (essence; true form) is what is in fact called the Sat. It is present when the person is in a state of unconsciousness, a state of Samadhi, *sushupti* (deep sleep), *svapna* (dreaming) or *jaagrita* (awake).

People have *kalpanaa* (imagined ideas) about where Swarga (heaven) is, where Narak (Hell) is, and where Saket and Goloka (the realms of Rama and Krishna) are. They wonder whether the Ishwara is *niraakaara* (without form) or *saakaara* (with form), or *anataryaamee* (abiding in the heart); but they don’t know about the Atma that is in this body of three and half arm-lengths. This is called ‘*deeyaa tale`andhe`raa`*’ – darkness under the lamp.

People know about the Badshahs and the Lords that ruled in history, but they can’t know what their *kartavya* (duty) is, without knowing what they are. If a man knows, ‘I am a policeman’, he will stand at the crossroad and direct the traffic. A man who knows ‘I am a doctor’ will treat people who are unwell. This is why, when we believe something to be our *kartavya* without knowing our *mein* (I; the Atma), and believe ourselves to be related to people and objects, and develop pride, it comes into the category of *agnaana* (lack of Gnan).

Another meaning of Satsang is the *pavitrataa* (purity) of our *hridaya* (heart) and *sad-bhaava* (benevolence for all). Take a good look and see whether the things you accumulate are Satya or not. Check whether the habits you have

developed are Satya or not. Does your *bhoga* (the things you indulge in) belong to you rightfully? Are the things you day-dream of in keeping with the Satya? Are your actions Satya? Do you act without thinking about whether your action is right or wrong?

You must be reading the Gita, I am sure. It describes how Bhishma, Drona, Karna and Kripacharya were arrayed in the enemy camp, ready for war. Dharmaraj Yudhishtira and Shri Krishna gave the prompting for war. Shri Krishna was seated on Arjuna's chariot. However, it was Arjuna who said, 'I cannot do anything without giving full consideration about its being good for our health, purity of character, controlling our organs, benevolence of heart, right thinking, and not resulting in pride or vanity. If you keep an eye on these four things you can take it that Satsang has come into your life.

So, one point is that the Atma is Sat, and its sang is Satsang. Secondly, when our *antahkarana* (subtle body or fourfold mind, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations and *ahankaara* = pride of individuality) contains *sadbhaava* and *sadvichaara* (benevolence and right thinking), their presence in your mind is Satsang.

Apart from this, Sat is to do Yagnas (instituted rituals), *daana* (give in charity), and *tapasyaa* (asceticism). Anything we do to please the Ishwara, for the good of people, for serving our mother and father, for purifying our antahkarana, and to obtain *tattvagnaana* (Gnan about the Tattva, meaning the essence of the Atma that is not separate from the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists) becomes Sat, and its sang is Satsang.

The sang of Bhagwan in your *jeevana* (life), the *aasakti* (attachment) for the Ishwara that you have, is Satsang. You may or may not know this, in Sanskrit the word 'sang' does not mean 'to be with'. In Hindi it means to be with, to associate with. In Sanskrit, however, *sanjanam sangah* – sang means aasakti.

Any good quality that has come into anyone in this world, till date, is because of Satsang. It has come because of aasakti for Bhagwan or for a Sant (Mahatma). All the good done in the world is because of Satsang.

Goswami Tulsidasji Maharaj has said:

Mati keerati gati bhooti bhalaayee, jo je`hi jatana jahaan jaba payee.

So jaanaba satsanga prabhaaoo, lokahun be`da na aana upaaaoo.

Good thoughts, renown, spiritual progress, the right kind of lifestyle, goodness, and every good effort done anywhere – know that it is because of the influence of Satsang. There is no other method, either in this world or in the Vedas.

There is no method apart from Satsang; neither in this world nor in the Vedas. If you want to gain buddhi, keep the company of intelligent people. If you want *keerti* (renown; fame) study the lives of those who have achieved fame. If you want *sadgati* (auspicious realms after leaving the body) associate with Sants. If you want *vaibhava* (grandeur) mix with people who were born poor and attained prosperity through enterprise and hard work. If you want *hita* (overall benefit) do Satsang. There is nothing in this world that is greater than Satsang.

It is written in the Bhagwat – *santah sangasya bhe`shajam* – the Sant is the medicine for curing worldly aasakti. If you get aasakti for others, you will be trapped. You will be bound to them. You will have to weep. *Priyam tvaam rotsyati* – your loved one will be the cause of tears for you. You will be tied emotionally to whoever you get attached to. Your happiness will be dependent on that person. It is only Satsang that frees you from worldly bondage. In this world there will be separation and there will be betrayal. The one you love may not love you. He will make you weep. Therefore, have the sang of that, which is Sat. This is vital for our jeevan.

So, accumulate Sat with your *shareera* (body). Let your food be Sat. Do *satkarma* (right actions; good deeds). Have sadbhava for all. Do sadvichar. Stay in a state of Sat, and know that your Atma is the eternal Brahman that is non-dual, and exists in all three tenses – the past, present and future. Satsang means all these things.

Now, do the sang of what appeals to you and what you are eligible for. Evaluate your activities and do the Satsang of all that is beneficial for you.

This is the meaning of Satsang.

Jignasa: How do *raaga* ((attachment) and *dve'sha* (aversion; hatred) increase? How can their *aatyantika nivritti* (complete removal) be achieved?

Samadhan: Let *raaga-dvesha* be removed little by little. Worry about their complete removal later. *Atyantik* means permanent, forever. If *raaga-dvesha* are removed totally, it is called *atyantik nivritti*. *Atyantik nivritti* is when *raaga* and *dvesha* never again come in the *mana* (emotional mind) they leave forever.

See first what it is that you feel is missing in your life. You will have *raaga* for that, which enables you to obtain what you desire; and you will have *dvesha* for that, which is an obstacle in your obtaining what you want. You will have *raaga* for the things that have given you *sukha* (happiness), give you *sukha*, and will give you *sukha* in future. Our feelings color our mind – *ranjanaat raagah*. Just as we dye a piece of cloth in some color, we color our *hridaya* (heart) with *raaga* for someone or something. If you give some thought to this you will realize that we color ourselves to make ourselves beautiful.

Why do we apply cream and powder? It is to make the skin soft and glowing. Why do we apply lipstick? What is the purpose of this *le'poshtika* – the *aushtika* (lips') *le'pa* (paint)? When it seems that the color of the lips is not attractive enough, we apply lipstick to make them more attractive.

In the same way, when it seems that we get *sukha* from some other, we get attached to them. We get painted in their hue. '*Sukhaanushaayee raagah*. *Sukham anushe'te`* - we get *raaga* wherever we feel we get *sukha*.

Look; we all know ourselves, and the faults we have. However, when someone begins to praise us, praising our qualities and telling us how good we are, our ears get colored in the color of their praise. When our *mana* gets colored by praise, we become favorably inclined towards that person. We feel like meeting him very often. This leads to *raaga*. It leads to *prema*.

In the same way, we get *dvesha* for the person from whom we get *dukha* – *dukhaanushayee dve'shah'*. We develop *dvesha* for whoever gives us *dukha*. *Dvesha* means, *jvalanaatmakachittavrittivisheshah'*. The burning in our heart – the raging fire of hatred in our heart – is called *dvesha*. When there is hatred

in the heart, our heart starts burning. Whenever we speak ill of anyone, it is a spark of dvesha, and when we do anything to harm someone, the fire of dvesha spreads.

In Sanskrit, dvesha is also called '*aashrayam ashnaati*' – fire burns the wood in which it is lit. Similarly, dvesha first burns the heart that houses it. After that, the flames of dvesha burn others. It causes suffering.

So, the first thing we should understand is that we develop raaga for the person through whom we wish to fulfill that, which we feel is lacking in us. And, we get dvesha for whoever obstructs the fulfillment of our desire. This is something we must be very careful about.

Raagadve`shaviyuktaistu vishayaanindriyaishcharan.

(Gita 2. 64)

(A spiritual aspirant achieves freedom from raaga-dvesha while continuing worldly interaction.)

Now, examine your *vyavahaara* (the way you behave with others), and make sure that you are not colored in someone else's hue, or burning because of dvesha for someone. Oh, what lacking is there in you that you seek fulfillment from some other, and have dvesha for the one who obstructs the fulfillment of your desire?

Now, take a look at *krodha* (anger). Where does anger come from, and what does it do? *Kam sukham runaddhi iti krodhah*. Krodha blocks the spring of sukha that flows in our heart. It is that, which prevents the sukha that comes from within. Later on, krodha takes the form of *himsaa* (violence; causing injury). Thus, first comes dvesha, then dvesha leads to krodha, krodha leads to himsa, and himsa takes on the form of *vidrodha* (rebellion). This is the family succession of dvesha.

Now, take a look at raaga. I have already told you that when we feel that something is lacking in us, and someone praises us – or, when our desires are fulfilled by someone – we develop raaga for that person. *Pakshapaata* (favoritism; partiality) follows raaga. Partiality is inevitable for whoever we have raaga for. Then, we begin to justify his actions, even if he steals

something or does something unethical. We say, 'Oh, he did this because of such and such a reason.' After that, we even become dishonest in order to give his sukha. We do himsa and we tell lies.

Therefore, both raaga and dvesha are lower us to great depths.

Now, apply your mind to this point – if you have Gnan about your Atma; if you know that your Atma is *nitya – shuddha – buddha – mukta* (eternal – pure – enlightened – liberated), that it is the *saakshaata* (incarnate) *parabrahma* (supreme all-pervading spirit) *paramaatmaa* (the Atma of all), and nothing else exists – who will you have dvesha for? Furthermore, there is no lacking in you, so there is no cause for you to feel happy when you hear yourself praised.

Those who chant – or hear – the Durga Saptashati (verses in praise of the Goddess Durga) know that two *asura* (Demons) were born at the beginning of Creation – *Vishnu karnamalodbhootau*. Raaga and dvesha were created from the dirt of Vishnu Bhagwan's ears.

What is the dirt of the ears? We hear about the faults of a person and gradually develop dvesha for him. Similarly we hear about the virtues of a person and develop raaga for him. This is why raaga and dvesha are the dirt of our ears. The two Asuras – the demons created by this dirt – are named in the Durga Saptashati as Madhu and Kaitabh. Raaga is called Madhu, and dvesha is called Kaitabh. These two Asuras are the forms of attachment and aversion. They are so powerful that they dare to fight even Vishnu! Vishnu means, the one whose *drishti* (viewpoint; vision) is *vyaapaka* (all-pervading) – *vive`shti iti vishnuh'*. He, who sits with the entire *vishva-brahmaanda* (world – universe) within Himself, and experiences the vishwa-brahmanda as His *svaroopa* (essence) – if even that Vishnu begins to speak ill of someone, and praise someone, Madhu-Kaitabh will come near Him and start fighting with Him.

The power of these two Asuras is so great that they fought with Vishnu for five thousand years, but they did not die. Fighting became a part of their life. Their life was filled with *vaimanasya* (hostility); they just went on fighting. Where raaga comes, push it away. Where dvesha comes, push it away.

Raaga and dvesha are such that they come very quickly. There is a town in Uttar Pradesh, called Mirjapur. It was the common reaction of the people

there, to take umbrage if they saw anyone walk on the road twirling his moustache. 'Oh, you are showing off your strength to me? Let me see how strong you are!' They would begin to wrestle.

One man asked, 'What crop do you plan to grow in your field?'

'I plan to grow sugar cane.'

'No, my brother, don't sow sugar cane in your field. It is possible that my buffalo gets into your field.'

'How can your buffalo get into my field? If she does, I will split your head!'

'Oh, is that so? Well, here is your field, and here is my buffalo going into it', and he hit the man with his stick. The other retaliated. Both went home with bleeding heads.

I have seen two brothers break each others' heads while gambling. There was great affection between them normally, but when they sat down to gamble, each one felt that he had won, and they fought bitterly. Similarly, a husband and wife quarrel when a few drinks have been taken. Thus, it takes no time at all for raaga-dvesha to rise up and overcome a person. They come with a good reason at times, and sometimes for no reason at all!

Therefore, you should make a *vyavasthaa* (arrangement) to protect yourself from them.

What is this *vyavastha*? It is to abstain from certain things and permit certain things in your life. This is called a systematic arrangement. We cannot say that a particular thing is good or bad, but there should be an arrangement in our life regarding what we will eat and what we will not eat, what we will do and what we will not do, what we will speak and what we will not speak, etc. If you keep a framework of decorum in your life, it will create a grading of raaga and dvesha.

A *vyavastha* should also be made in the mana about what you will allow your mind to think about and what you will not let your mind linger on. To remove raaga and dvesha completely, attach your raaga to an object you cannot see with your eyes. Who is that? It is Bhagwan, it is the Ishwara, the Paramatma. Become attached to the Paramatma. Have prema for Him.

How will that benefit you? What is the advantage in loving the Paramatma?

The benefit is that you will not have raaga for anyone in this world; you will have raaga only for Bhagwan. Similarly, if there is dvesha in your heart – the way Shishupal and Kansa had dvesha for Shri Krishna – attach your dvesha to Shri Krishna. Then, you will have no dvesha for anybody in the world. Whichever *monovritti* (mental inclination) you attach to the Ishwara, you will be freed of that monovritti for anybody in this world.

If you want to find out where raaga and dvesha abide, you will find that they abide in your mana. When you get attached to one Party, dvesha for the other Party will come into your mana. These days, it is seen plainly that when someone stands for elections the people of his Party say that he is a very honorable man even if he is an absolute scoundrel. In the same way, even if the candidate of the opposition Party is an upright, competent man, they say, 'No, no! He is not a good man. Don't vote for him.' This is partiality for the Party.

What is the reason for this? It is partiality for the State, caste, *sampradaaya* (religious sect), and language. The alienation we harbor in our heart divides and separates everything in two parts. Raaga is developed for one and dvesha for the other. We should be alert about this. In this *srishti* (Creation) only the Ishwara exists. The *sattaa* (pure existence) is His, the anand is his, the *aishvarya* (grandeur) is His, and the *maadhurya* (sweetness) is His.

Continue with all your worldly interaction. Live like a husband with your wife, and like a wife with your husband. Treat your son as your son, and mother as your mother. Interact with all, but have no raaga or dvesha for any. Bhagwan has said that this is the best way to live.

Raagadve`shaviyuktaistu vishayaanindriyaishcharan,

aatmavashyairvidhe`yaatmaa prasaadamadhigachhati.

Prasaade`sarvadukhaanaam haanirasyopajaayate`,

prasannache`taso hyaashu buddhih paryavatishtate`.

(Gita 2. 64 -65)

(A spiritual aspirant who has control over his mental inclinations, intellect, emotions, and ego indulges in worldly pleasures without *raaga-dvesha*. He is always tranquil.

When the mind is serene and happy, no *dukha* troubles the heart. The intellect of a Yogi who works with dispassion is established in the *Paramatma*.)

One point is that when you look at someone, there should be no *raaga* in your eyes for a particular person, and no *raaga* in your ears for a particular voice, and no *dvesha* for anyone either. Your hands and feet should carry on their activities in an orderly manner – without *raaga* or *dvesha* in your heart – and all your organs should be controlled.

When someone drives a car at high speed it goes ahead a little even when he applies the brakes. When a person runs very fast he cannot stop suddenly. The *ve`ga* (velocity; speed) of your life should never be out of control – neither the *vega* of *kaama* (desire; lust), nor of *krodha* (anger), nor of *lobha* (greed). Immorality increases with the *vega* of *kama*. Dishonesty comes into our life when the *vega* of *lobha* increases, and *himsa* comes into our life when the *vega* of *krodha* increases. Therefore, '*aatmavaishyaih*', practice self-control.

When we speak we should be careful that we don't say anything that is not true. We should not tell lies even inadvertently. We should say things that are beneficial. We should say what is *priya* (pleasing), and speak with brevity. Furthermore, what we say should be appropriate to the occasion. And, we should speak when there is a need to say something. '*Mukhamasteeti vaktavyam*' – to go on talking because you have a tongue is not right. That is not the right method of life.

The method for living in the right way is that all your *indriya* (five sense organs and five organs of action) should be under your control and your *mana* (emotional mind) should be obedient to the decision of your *buddhi* (intellect). Tell your hand, 'Stay on my chest until I give you the command to move.' Tell your feet, 'Sit in this *aasana* (Yogic posture) until I give you leave to move.' Tell your eyes, 'Remain shut until I tell you to open.' All your faculties should be under your control – *vidhe`yaatmaa*'. This automatically brings contentment into your life.

A person who lives with self-restraint is not dependent on wealth or worldly pleasures for his inner contentment. His tranquility is the peace of keeping his organs under control. This contentment is not obtained by anything else. Therefore, if your *mana* is *prasanna* (happy) there is no *dukha* anywhere in the world for you.

Oh, if the world gets spoilt, let it. Why do you spoil your *chitta* (mental inclinations)? The Parameshwara is seated in your heart – ‘*hridde`she`rjuna tishthati*’. So shake hands with Bhagwan for a moment when you wake up in the morning. Let the *niraakaara* (the formless Brahman) stay with the Arya Samajis. Let the *nirguna* (the Brahman without attributes) stay with the Vedantis. Let Khuda talk to the Muslims and let Jesus talk to the Christians. As far as you are concerned, think, ‘I have met Bhagwan.’ He catches you and embraces you, and puts His hand on your head.

There was a Thakur Saheb (person of rank) who had gone for the Delhi Durbar when King George V visited India. He had the privilege of shaking hands with the Monarch. He was so overwhelmed by this honor that even when he was an old man, he would say, ‘Maharaj, who can compare with me?’ In the same way, shake hands with Bhagwan just once, every morning when you wake up. Say, ‘Oh, what *raaga-dvesha* will I have for the people of this world? My connection is with the Parameshwara incarnate. What need have I to sully my heart for anyone?’

The absolute removal of *raaga-dvesha* is a good thing, so shake hands with Bhagwan in the morning and tell Him, ‘Prabhu, just for today, let me not have *raaga-dvesha* for anybody.’ In the beginning, pray for your heart to be free of *raaga-dvesha* for just twenty four hours; not for your whole life. If you make a vow for your entire life you will forget about it, and *raaga-dvesha* will seep in. Therefore, you should make this vow every morning for just the next twenty four hours. You should remind yourself about this intermittently during the day. Then, when you go to bed at night, you should look back to check if you have been partial to someone and favored someone unjustly.

Have you been guilty of favoritism in the course of the day or not? ‘This man is one who will always be my enemy. He must be driven away by fair means or foul. He should not be allowed to thrive. His downfall has to be contrived

somehow.’ Have you done these things or not? Check every night before you go to sleep. If you have done these things, ask Bhagwan to forgive you.

The daily ritual of Sandhya Vandan contains these prayers: ‘*Ahastadvalumpatu. Raatristadvalumpatu. Yadaham paapamakaarsham, manasaa vaachaa hastaabhyaam padbhyaam udare`na shishnaa ahastadavalumpatu. Raatristadvalumpatu.*’ This daily prayer means that no faults should come into our life, and for our good qualities to remain intact. Never have the pride that you will never get some dosha, or that your good qualities will always remain with you.

There was a Mahatma at Kashi (Benares). He went to bathe in the Gangaji every morning. He had to pass by the house of a prostitute that was on the road. She would come out of the house and tease him by asking, ‘Mahatmaji, are you *kacche`* (raw) or *pakke`* (ripe)?’ The Mahatma would smile and go on his way. This went on for many years. People say that the prostitute’s house was near a Police Station, in a Square.

The Mahatma died one day. The cortege passed the house of the prostitute. She came out of the house and said, ‘Oh, he died without answering me!’ The Mahatma came back to life. ‘I am *pukkaa* (ripe; mature)’, he said. ‘As long as I was in the body, the possibility remained that there could be some lapse. How could I claim to be *pukka*? Now I am going to the funeral pyre without having broken my vows of Sanyas, so I can say that I am *pukka*.’

So, my brother, as long as the body is alive there should be no relaxation of alertness. The mana always has some weakness. For that, we should pray to Bhagwan. If there is an inclination for lust in your heart when you are alone, go and mingle with people. If desire is aroused when you are with people, go and sit in solitude. Read the Upanishads, read the Gita, do *praanaayaama* (Yogic breath control exercises) for a little while – even just a minute or two. Start chanting Bhagwan’s name, or remain silent.

Decide from before that if you say anything in anger you will penalize yourself. You will punish yourself if you deliberately touch someone lustfully. The penalty can be giving up tea for a week, or giving up sugar, milk, or something else you’re fond of. Then, the cup of tea will float before your mind’s eye saying, ‘you are leaving me’, as soon as a feeling of lust or anger rises in you.

That means there will be a shift in your mental inclination. A new thought will come before you, and raaga-dvesha will be weakened.

Pray to Bhagwan. Look at His beauty and sweetness. Attach your love to Him. The Atma goes from the *jaagrita* (waking state) to *svapna* (dreaming state), and leaves both to go into *sushupti* (the deep sleep state). It leaves sushupti and goes into the jagrita and svapna states.

The jagrita state is the office of the Atma. A person does good and bad things in this state. And, svapna is the laboratory, where the Atma experiments. Do you know the extent of the power you have? You create an ocean in your dream. You create the Himalaya, the sun and the moon, the Ishwara – the Parameshwara – in your dream. Who creates them? It is your mana. The power of your mana is seen in your dreaming state.

Where does this power go during your waking state? And then, both your waking state and dreaming state are folded up when you go into the deep sleep state, like Shankarji! Like Brahmaji you create new worlds in your dreaming state. Like Vishnu you do all your worldly activities in your waking state. Where does this hidden shakti in you come from?

You are that, which can sustain the whole world. You are that, which can create new worlds, and you are that, which can destroy the whole world. That Ishwara – '*hridde`she`rjuna tishthati*' – is within you. You are one with that Parameshwara. So, listen to me without any hesitation – '*hichko mat*'! Your shakti wanes because you falter.

Look, I had gone to Delhi on one occasion. This was some forty or forty five years ago. Someone had given us tickets for a Second Class compartment. My Brahmachari (celibate student) was with me. When we reached the station, we found that the train had no Second Class compartment. I decided to sit in a First Class compartment. The T.T.I. told me, 'Your ticket is for a Second Class compartment.' I told him, 'All right, my brother, take me to the Second Class compartment. We will sit there.' No Second Class compartment could be found. The man wrote 'Second Class' on the compartment and went away. The First Class compartment was turned into a Second Class compartment! Wonderful!

Now, I decided, 'hichko mat'. When the train stopped at a station my Brahmachari got down to get water. The train started. I pulled the chain to stop the train. 'Hichko mat.' The train stopped and my Brahmachari got on. The Guard came and confiscated our tickets. We continued to travel peacefully. The Guard came back and gave us back our tickets without saying anything.

We got off at our station. We had nine miles to go, and it had already become dark. I said, 'Hichko mat'. I knew the road to the place we were to stay at. When we reached, there was a padlock on the door. I said, 'Hichko mat' and pulled at the lock. It was a defective lock; it opened to my touch.

A number of engineers were called for an interview. The Sahib who was to conduct the interview was sitting in the visitors' room. 'What can I do? The door is locked. I don't have the key,' he said. 'How can I interview anyone?' Nobody knew what to do. One applicant stood up. He went to the door and pushed at the door. It opened. It was not locked. The Sahib said, 'The interview is over. I sat outside to see whether any of you have initiative.'

Therefore, my brother, problems come in this world. The dilemmas that come into your life, the dukha that comes into your life, the problems you face, all frighten you. You don't know what you should do. The fact is your shakti is the shakti of the Ishwara. Your Atma is the Parabrahm Paramatma incarnate. There is no other who pressurizes you and takes you on the wrong path. You lower yourself, so be alert! Gather you *svaroop*a (essence; true form) and see – there is anand, only anand in Creation. There is no dukha anywhere. Dukha is not created by anyone's coming or going, or being betrayed, dying, or living.

Keep your mana protected by Satsang. Make it so strong that dukha cannot come into it. The purpose of our *aadhyaatma vidyaa* (the science of spiritual matters) is to remove your dukha, remove your indolence, and mental dullness. It is for giving you *paramaananda* (supreme bliss). It is for giving you *avinaashee jeevana* (eternal life).

See the waves of anand rise in the ocean. Anand ripples in the rivers – '*madhu vaataaraayite*' – anand flows in the breeze; it showers from the rays of the sun and the moon. Fountains of anand rise up everywhere. It is only a mistake

of the buddhi – it is just a false impression – that we feel there is dukha in our life.

It is for removing this mistake that Satsang and Atmagnan are needed.

: 3 : & : 4 :

Jignasa: *Asangashastre`na driddhe`na chhittvaa* (15. 3)

Tatah padam tadparimaagitavyam (15. 4)

(Cut down this tree with the axe of firm detachment,) 15. 3

(and then search for the Parabrahm Paramatma.) 15. 4

What is the *asanga shastra* (weapon of detachment) written in the Gita? And which is the path the Gita tells us to seek?

Samadhan: It is the *svabhaava* (nature) of not only human beings, but all beings, that we don't want dukha; we want sukha. If we try to touch an ant or a bedbug, it will try to run away. This means that we wish to escape from any situation where we experience dukha.

The first thing that should come into the life of a human being is to understand our dukha and our sukha, and try to be free of them. Are you alert about making yourself free of the things that cause dukha for you? What you want is: let me not get dukha; let me get sukha – '*dukham me`maabhoot sukham me`bhooyaat.*'

This dukha, from which you wish to free yourself – where is it found? Sukha means, *nirmala hridaya* (an unsullied heart) – '*sushtu kham hridayam gaganam yasmaat tatsukham.*' Just as when the sky is filled with clouds at times, or there is a dust storm, and it becomes very hot, the sky is no longer a form of sukha; it becomes a form of dukha. In the same way, when the clouds of greed spread in our heart, a dust storm of lust whirls in our heart, or the fire of hate rages in our heart, we experience dukha in our heart.

We experience dukha when things go against our wishes. It rains when we don't want it to rain. The weather is cold when we don't want it to be cold. We want our wife to behave in a certain way and that does not happen. Whenever things go according to our wishes, the feelings are what we want, the relationships are favorable, etc we feel sukha. And, whenever things are contrary to what we want we feel dukha.

If you give some thought to the causes of dukha you will see that the *jida* (insistence) – your *duraagraha* (stubborn urge) that ‘my *mana* (emotional mind) is right. All others’ *mana* are slaves of my *mana*. Only my thinking is correct; the thinking of others is defective,’ is the cause of your dukha.

Therefore, to be free of dukha it is necessary to see where our *aasakti* (attachment; weakness for something) is. The youngsters in present times don’t want to keep a *chotee* (long tuft of hair at the crown of the head kept by Brahmin men). Their parents feel they should keep a *choti*. This becomes a cause of dukha. The husband does not want the wife to go shopping so often. He feels dukha when she spends money. The wife wants her husband to comply with her indications; she feels dukha when he does not comply.

What is to be done under such circumstances? Should the husband dance to the wife’s wishes, or should the wife become a machine that does what the husband wants? There is a *duragraha* in our *mana* about our ideas, wishes, and the resolves we make. Dukkha comes into our heart when these are thwarted.

What is the method of saving ourselves from this dukha? Can any man be completely favorable to his wife’s expectations? Or, can any woman behave exactly as her husband wants? Can children do everything their parents and grandparents expect from them? No. This is unthinkable! Think for yourself – do you wear the *paghdi* your grandfather may have worn, or the Gandhi *topi* your father may have worn? Do you wear a *dhoti* like they did?

See the changes that come into the world with an objective viewpoint. The mother and father were born twenty five years earlier, and the son and daughter were born twenty five years later. Twenty five years passed in between. Times changed, habits changed, and behavior changed. If you get trapped in the thinking of fifty years ago, or twenty five years ago, what will be the result? You will cause suffering for yourself, because things will always change. You can’t stop change.

I know of many elderly people who are dukhi because their children refuse to eat *ghee* (clarified butter). Earlier, people believed that *ghee* was good for the mind and body. Now doctors say that it is bad for cholesterol. It is fattening and leads to ill health. What now? The elderly are upset because their children refuse to take *ghee* and milk. The youngsters say that their parents and

grandparents are gaining weight because they take ghee. Their wives come and tell me, 'Maharaj, please tell them to lose weight.' Therefore, this tendency of holding on to past practices is not good. One should hold on to the things that are useful and beneficial, and be prepared to let go of the things that are harmful.

Look at Shri Krishna's Govardhan Leela. Shri Krishna was seven years old and Nanda Baba was eighty seven years old – this is what the people of Vraja say. Shri Krishna came and told Nanda Baba, 'Baba, why do you do the puja of Indra, the Raja of Swarga? Why do you use up all the milk, ghee, and food in the house for him? Don't do this. Instead of Indra's puja, do the puja of the cows and feed the Brahmins. Let the people of our clan laugh and play, dance and have fun. Give up doing Indra's puja.'

Shri Krishna's words had such an impact on Nanda Baba that he agreed. He never thought, 'How can I follow the advice of a seven year old child?' The child's reasoning convinced him, and he accepted it. Had Nanda Baba shown his long beard to Shri Krishna, saying, 'This beard has not turned white by the rays of the sun; it has grown with generations of doing Indra's puja. You will have to follow the tradition,' there would have been a clash of opinion between father and son.

The meaning of '*asangashastre`na driddhe`na chhittvaa`*' is that you should not have asakti for anything that is not right. *Asanga* (to be unconnected) means *anaasakti* (to be free from asakti). This is the weapon for protecting yourself from asakti. Hold this weapon firmly in your hand, and become free from fear. Be ready to let go of whatever is harmful for you.

The topic here is the world that changes, the changes in lifestyle and attitudes. Give some thought to this. You see a river. The water changes constantly even though it seems to be the same as yesterday. You see the mangoes growing on trees, but you don't know when they grow and when they ripen. The electrical bulb that gives light seems to be the same, but it consumes unit after unit of electricity, giving out fresh light. New electricity comes into it to activate it.

In the same way the body of a human being changes every moment. It is written in our ancient books of knowledge and Shastras that the entire body changes every seven years. Then, when we try to clutch on to this constantly

changing world, we get attached to it. A fish goes in search of food. It bites a morsel that is attached to a hook, and gets caught. People who trap birds make a triangle and apply a strong adhesive to it. They keep some grain within it. The wings of the birds get stuck to this when they come to eat the grain, and they are caught.

The attachment we have for the objects of the world are the same. A person who gets asakti gets dukha. So, keep an open attitude towards the changes that come. Change happens by the Ishwara's shakti, by Prakriti (Nature; the Ishwara's power of Creation), and political and social influences. We should understand and accept the things that are beneficial. We should not get caught by things the way a fish gets caught in a hook, or a bird in a snare. An elephant falls in to a pit dug by men and gets captured. Therefore, we should not get stuck to old habits. We should give some thought to the changes brought by time, and accept what is good. This is what our buddhi should be like.

Puraanamitye`va na saadhu sarvam na chaapi sarvam navamityavavadyam.

A thing does not become right on the strength of its being old; neither does a thing become wrong because it is new. We should examine the virtues and faults of things before we accept or reject them.

The proof of this is are the *satpurusha* (people who have realized the ultimate Truth), *sadshastra* (the scriptures that explain the ultimate Truth), the *sadvichaara* (the thinking that leads to the ultimate Truth) and *satsanga* (associating with the people and books that reveal the ultimate Truth).

The Satpurusha test things and let go of what is bad and wrong. They hold on to what is good and right. Foolish people don't give any thought to things. They are like a herd of sheep that follow the leading sheep blindly, jumping into a well if the leading sheep falls into a well!

Therefore, the meaning of asangata is to have the ability to accept changes in the behavior and habits that are a result of changing times. Now, if someone were to insist that his hair should never turn white, that is not possible. There was a Mahatma whose disciples spread the word that their Guruji would never grow old; he would always remain young. When the Mahatma's hair began to turn white the disciples would come to him early morning, and pluck out the

white hairs from his head. Oh my brother, how long will you continue to pluck out white hairs? How long will youth last?

So, let the world change, let the *drishya* (that, which is seen, as separate from the one who sees) change, let society change, let political parties change, let people change and let the birds and animals change. Don't get stuck to the change; don't be colored by it. Don't have its *sanga* (attachment). This is the Shastra, and it stays with you.

Look, there is a difference between the *astra* and *shastra*. An astra is a weapon that is thrown, like an arrow. A shastra is a weapon that is held in the hand, like a sword or spear. The shastra given to you is *asangataa* (detachment). Keep it in your *buddhi* (intellect) and use it to protect yourself from getting trapped by anything that is perceived in this interactive world of ours, because the drishya is subject to change. What your buddhi seeks is *nitya* (eternal); the nitya is not subject to change.

The weapon of asangata must be *driddha* (firm; unrelenting) – *asangashastre`na driddhe`na chhittvaa*. There is a story in the Puranas about a Mahatma who went to Raja Mandhata to see how much *shraddhaa-bhakti* (faith – devotion) the Raja had. The Mahatma had a long beard. He was old. His body shook with weakness. His stomach was caved in. His frame was bent and he staggered as he walked. He told Mandhata, 'Get your daughter married to me.'

This proposal did not appeal to Mandhata at all, but he was afraid that the Mahatma would give him a *shaap* (curse) if he refused. 'All right, Maharaj,' he said, 'please go to the princesses' palace. I will get you married to whichever girl chooses you as a husband.' When the Mahatma went into the princesses' palace, he saw some fifty girls there. Each and every one of them wanted to get married to him, because he had transformed himself into a handsome young man with a splendid physique and great learning.

The Mahatma had gone to test the shraddha and bhakti of the Raja. Then he transformed himself to demonstrate his *siddhi* (supernatural powers). However, he became so caught up in his urge to test Mandhata and display his

powers that five thousand years passed without his noticing when the day dawned and night fell. He got many children.

The fact is that sang is a very big *dosha* (fault; flaw). If you keep the sang of a gambler he will induce you to gamble at least once. If you keep the company of a habitual liar, you will find yourself telling lies inadvertently. If you associate with immoral and unethical people your behavior will be influenced by them. If you keep the sang of this constantly changing world it will make you involved in its coils. Life, death, and change will dominate you, and you will remain dukhi.

Therefore, give up sang. This is what the Gita says:

Na roopamasye`ha tathopalabhyate` naanto na chaadirna cha sampratishthaa (15. 3)

Ashvatthame`nam suvirooddhamoolam asangashastre`na driddhe`na chhitvaa. (15. 2)

Ashvattha means a banyan tree – ‘*na shva tishtthati*’ – that, which is here today, but will not remain tomorrow, is also called ashvattha.

So, who do you have asakti for? Veda Bhagwan says, ‘*Ashvatthe` vo nishadanam. Parne` vo vasatee kritah.*’ Meaning, you are living on a banyan tree, on one of its leaves, like a drop of water. Your body will fall any moment when the wind shakes the leaf. This is the state of the *shareera* (body). The *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of this world is that it achieves nothing to go on thinking about it. It is not what it seems to be. What seems fair is not fair, and what seems dark is not dark. What seems soft and smooth is not soft and smooth. What is seen does not exist.

The Gita says:

*Na roopamasye`ha tathopalabhyate`
naanto na chaadirna cha sampratishsthaa.
(15. 3)*

This world has neither a beginning nor an end – it is bereft of any beginning, middle or end. Its roots are embedded so firmly in our buddhi that we cannot sever them without using this Shastra of asangata.

We want to save ourselves from dukha, but remain stuck to foolishness. A person who has prema for the *jada* (that, which has no consciousness) will ultimately become jada, and a person who has prema for the *che`tana* (consciousness) will become one with the chetan. Therefore, let go of your asakti of the jada and then –

Tatah padam tatparimaargitavyam yasmingataa na nivartanti bhooyah.

(15. 4)

Have prema for that Ishwara, for that Paramatma, for the Atmadev, who is hidden. Seek Him. Find out where He is. You see everyone in this world – the dark and the fair, the black garment, yellow garment and white garment. Have you ever given thought to the eye through which you see? Who is it who sits behind the window of the eye, and sees? How many men and women and changing seasons have passed before them? How many times have tides changed in the sea? How many rivers have flowed on? But have you ever looked at the one who sits behind the eye, seeing everything? Who is that? It is you!

The colors – red, black, yellow, etc – can't see your eye, but your eye sees them all. Even people can't see your eye, but your eye sees them. Your eye does not see the one who sits behind it. He is the only one who never changes in this world of change.

Ashareeram shareere`shu anavasthe`shvavasthitam,

mahaantam vibhumaatmaanam mattvaa dheero na shochati.

You will see that the one who is within this shareer – the one who sees everything – is without a shareer. He is unchanging among this changing world. He is not small – He is *mahaana* (great), He is *vyaapaka* (all-pervading). He is our Atma, and our own true Self.

When you think about this, all your dukha will be removed – ‘*na shochati*’ – you will not be concerned with anything in this world that leaves or changes, or dies; or with any transient situation. And you will not be dukhi.

Therefore, the external *jadataa* (state of lacking consciousness) is *drishya* (something that can be seen, but cannot see). It is subject to change. It is *anitya* (not permanent), *dukhadaayee* (giver of dukha). You have got attached to these insensate objects. You must detach yourself from them with the thought, ‘What is there, that is nitya, in these anitya objects?’

Nityo nityaanaam che`tanashche`tanaanaam,

e`ko bahunaam yo vidadhaati kaamaan.

Look for that Atma, which is nitya, because with it, there is no changing, no living or dying, and no coming or going.

Yasmingataa na nivartanti bhooyah.

(15. 4)

Once you go there, there is no coming back to this world. Who is like that? It is your Atma, and it is here, right now; not after death! Everything that is said about the *paramaarth*a (highest spiritual goal) is for after death. That, however, is the responsibility of the Padres. They will write a letter and give it to you, and you will go to Heaven. Swarga and Narak (Heaven and Hell) are the responsibility of the Purohits (priests who conduct rituals). They will tell you to do *daana* (give in charity) and send you there. It is the responsibility of the Maulvis to make you do Namaz, and send you to Bahishta or Dojakh. That is a separate section.

Our Vedic Paramartha is not far from you. It is not in Swarga; it is here. There is no delay in your obtaining it – it is not obtained after death – because it is here, now, already with you. It is not any other; it is your own Self. It is now. It is here. And it is you, yourself!

Tatah padamtatparimaargitavyam.

(15. 4)

That means, know that Atma and become immersed in anand right now, in the present moment. There is no transaction taken on loan; it is a cash transaction. Take it today, and take it now!

Jignasa: To what extent is the *japa* (ritual chanting) of Bhagwan's *naama* (name) and *sankeertana* (singing Bhagwan's name) helpful for obtaining *maanasika shakti* (mental strength) and *shaanti* (inner tranquility)?

Samadhan: You see, if you accept some *niyama* (self-imposed disciplines) in your life, your *aatmabala* (strength of the Atma; strength of character) will increase. Take a *niyam* that you will not have a meal until you have done a certain amount of *japa* or some *poojaa* (ritual worship). You will have to endure some discomfort the day you are late in doing your *japa*. When you endure discomfort in order to adhere to your *niyam* your will power, your strength of character will be enhanced. The mind becomes weak when a person is not prepared to face some hardship. This is a common rule.

Now, see another point. Have *shraddha* (faith) on someone, that 'He will protect me.' There was a soldier on a battlefield. He fell while fighting, but he did not lose hope. He had faith that his General would support him, that the President and the whole Nation was behind him. He had faith that the Army would follow, and they would win the war.

In the same way, whatever work you do, do it with the faith that you are supported by your *Shashtra* (Scriptures), your *samvidhaana* (Constitution), your Guru, your *Ishwara*; that these will help and support you. When you have *shraddha* in your life, your strength of character will remain strong.

Manobala (strength of mind) increases by maintaining a *niyam*. It is also increased by *shraddha*. When we see others in the same situation, it also helps our *manobal* to increase. For example, if we are in a boat when a fierce storm rises and the boat rocks, we will feel, 'Oh, what happens to others will also happen to me.' Our mind is strengthened when we see others who are in the same situation as we are.

This is why we need to keep to our *niyam* in our life if we want to develop strength of character. We need to have faith in our *Sadguru* (an enlightened Mahatma who has accepted us as his disciple), and in the *Ishwara*. And, we

should do an *anushthaana* (specific ritual) of love according to the *vidhi* (rules) of our *saadhana* (method for spiritual progress).

You can say, 'Rama, Rama'. You can say 'Rama' or 'Shiva' or any other name. For me there is no difference between them. You can say 'Om' or 'Soham', whether your mind remains steady or not. First, see whether your tongue is moving or not. You listen to Vedanta here. The tongue is the *annamaya kosha* (the gross sheath of the Atma created by food). The *che'tana* (consciousness) sits in it, and becomes the owner of the tongue. The tongue does not move on its own volition; it moves when the mover moves it. I had heard Vishnu Digambarji sing:

Rama Rama Rama Rama Rama Rama Rama,

Raja Rama Rama Rama, Raja Rama Rama Rama.

When other also sing it, it becomes *naama-sankeertana* (singing of Bhagwan's name). If you hear it or say it by yourself it becomes naam- japa. You sit in your annamaya kosha and move in the form of your tongue. The movement is done by the shakti of the *praana* (vital life breath). Your *praanamaya kosha* (the sheath of the prana) is applied, and it is you, who sits in the pranamaya kosha and moves the tongue.

Now, how will the tongue move unless you want to make it move? So, the *manomaya kosha* (the sheath of the emotional mind) is also applied. But, who can make the tongue move repeatedly if there is no *kartaa* (doer), no *vignaanamaya kosha* (sheath of acquired knowledge)? Furthermore, why will you say 'Rama' unless you have shraddha? We take Bhagwan's naam because it has its own importance.

What does it achieve when Bhagwan's name is uttered repeatedly? A part of your annamaya kosha, a part of your pranamaya kosha, a part of your manomaya kosha, a part of your vignanamaya kosha, and a part of your *aanandamaya kosha* (the sheath of pure joy that is closest to the Atma within) merge. You get happiness in taking Bhagwan's name. You have the feeling of doing something very good – the best thing you can do!

What does that achieve? What is achieved by the *vritti* (mental inclination) of *moda – pramoda* (pleasure – joy) and anand that flows in your *hridaya* (heart)?

You are taking the naam – Rama, Rama, Rama, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Shiva, Shiva, Shiva, Ma, Ma, Ma; but what are you doing? What you are doing is that all five koshas of yours are uniting in completing a *kriyaa* (action; activity) that increases the strength of your *mana* (emotional mind) and *shareera* (body). Don't consider it to be an ordinary activity.

You cannot keep your mind in a good condition by using a sickle or a hammer. Saying Rama, Rama, Rama, creates a *spandana* (pulsation; vibration) in your body. It improves the flow of blood and activates the nerves and veins. The effect of this is that the blood and flesh in your body are purified. You all know that when something is shaken it is bound to have an effect.

There was a lady called Tara Devi. She was a renowned exponent of Indian Classical music. When she sat to sing, a plate with powder spread on it was placed before her. The vibrations of the *raaga – raaginee* (specific modes of Indian Classical music – their variations) she sang created pictures in the powder according to the raaga she sang. Once, a Bengal scholar asked her to sing the Bhairashtaka composed by Shankaracharya. When Tarabai sang the eight verses eulogizing Shiva, a dog with Bharavji (a manifestation of Shiva) was created in the powder!

Thus, words are forms of vibrations that induce movement. Whenever anything shakes in this world, there is always a sound at its source, whether we can hear it with our ears or through some instrument. Your body will have a spandan of cruelty, a spandan of the prana, and a kriya, and that spandan will affect your body without any doubt, whether you are aware of it or not. I have seen a toy bus that moves when someone says 'Go', and stops when someone says 'Stop'. It is a sound, after all. I have seen a toy that starts beating a drum when someone claps his hands, and stops when someone claps again. This is the power of *shabda* (words; sound). People have cordless telephones and remote control for their T.V.s. Thus, the power in sound and action is also present in japa and sankirtan.

There was a Mahatma who stayed at Gwarighat near Jabalpur. He was very old when I met him. He used to lie passively, doing nothing. Mahamandaleshwara Shri Chaitanya Giri told him one day, 'You are a Sadhu, but you just lie around doing nothing. You don't even do japa.'

'Swamiji, place the palm of my hand on your ear,' said the Mahatma. Shri Chaitanya Giri placed his palm on his ear. He heard 'Rama, Rama' coming from the Mahatma's palm. 'Put your ear to my chest,' said the Mahatma. Shri Chaitanya heard 'Rama, Rama' coming out from the Mahatma's chest. The same thing happened when he put his ear to the sole of the Mahatma's foot and on his head. The Mahatma's whole body resounded with the name of Rama. What I mean to say is that when we utter Bhagwan's name it pervades every fiber of our body, and it can be heard by anyone who has the requisite sensitivity.

There was a Mahatma who had come to the Gita Press at Gorakhpur. One hair of his head stood up every time he uttered Bhagwan's name. There was a dog there that would start dancing to the rhythm of sankirtan. The power of Bhagwan's name. The power of Bhagwan's name is amazing! I do not say that you will go to Swarga if you go on taking Bhagwan's name, or that you will become Mukta (liberated). All I am saying is that by doing japa with *nishthaa* (staunch faith) your body will become *divya* (divine) in this very life.

I have seen the greatness of uttering Rama-naam and Krishna-Krishna-Krishna during sankirtan. I have seen tables shaking when kirtan is done. Therefore, this shakti that a name of Bhagwan has, to change the world, can also change your life. Never doubt it! Your life will definitely change if you take Bhagwan's name.

Now, consider this point: when we do other *saadhana* (methods for spiritual progress) it is the strength of our body that does the work. However, the naam is such that Bhagwan's *anugraha* (compassion; Grace) does the work when His name is uttered. Won't Bhagwan's throne be shaken by our uttering His name? Won't His heart melt? Won't His eyes be drawn towards us? Oh, my friend, there is great power in Bhagwan's name. Bhagwan Himself has put His shakti into His name.

*Naamnaamakaari bahudhaa nijasarvashaktistattraarpitaa niyamitah
smarane`na kaalah.*

Bhagwan has created many names for Himself – you can choose any one for yourself. Each name is filled with His shakti. Every atom has the power to destroy the world – this has been proved by modern science. Just as an atom has the power to destroy the whole world, one sound also has the power to create and destroy the world. The sound in Creation is one. The different sounds we utter are created by a little pressure on the throat when we say ‘ka’, ‘kha’, and ‘ga’. If we apply a little pressure on the palate the sounds ‘cha’, ‘chha’, and ‘ja’ are made. All words are spoken in their own position, or by a special effort, but the one whole *dhvani* (sound) is amid all these sounds. The different vowels and consonants are superimposed on that basic sound. Therefore, take the *aashraya* (refuge) of the *dhvani* and become one with the fundamental sound that is the root.

You see *roopa* (form; appearance) and you look at it. What is roop? It is a form of the letter ‘ka’ on paper. The script may be English, Urdu, Hindi, Tamil or Telegu. Or, it may be German, Russian or Chinese. Whatever it may be, the script does not matter. The line is drawn. We see it and say, ‘This is ‘ka’, or ‘kha’, or ‘ga’.’ What is the *lakeera* (line)? What is the *re`khaa* (mark; sign)? It is an orderly arrangement of *bindu* (dots). And, what is a bindu? It is something that has a position, but no length or breadth. That means, no bindu – no dot – is separate from its *adhishtaana* (substratum). And, no *dhvani* is separate from the *mahaa-dhvani* (great sound). Small sounds will fade away, small forms will vanish. You will see that the name and form were artificial; it is the Paramatma who is seen in all forms.

This naam-japa and sankirtan is an extraordinary thing. Mahatmas have savored it to an extent that is not easy for you to fathom. For example, the *mahaavaakya roopa pramaana* (the proof in the form of the great statement) is important in Vedanta. ‘*Tattvamasī*’ (Tat = That, the Brahman, tvam = you, the Atma, asi = is; the Brahman is the Atma that is you). ‘*Aham brahmaasmi*’ (I, the Atma, am the Brahman). ‘*Ayamaatmaa brahma*’ (This Atma is the Brahman). ‘*Pragnaanam brahma*’ (the pure consciousness that is not attached to anything is the Brahman). These Mahavakyas are accepted as the *pramaana*

(proof; that which establishes a truth that can never be negated). No form can be seen without the name. The name is essential for a *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of any roop.

The naam can go anywhere with you because it is *vyaapaka* (all-pervading). It will go with you wherever you go. It can stay with you any time – in *shuddhi* (when you are pure) and in *ashuddhi* (when you are impure), because the naam is the Brahman. The Brahman is present in the *shuddha* (pure) as well in the *ashuddha* (impure).

The naam is the Brahman, so it is present in *de'sha-vide'sha* (in our land and in other lands). The naam is the Brahman; it stays with the *adhikaaree* (eligible) and *anadhikaaree* (ineligible). The pleasure a person gets in taking the naam cannot be described verbally. If you take the name of Bhagwan you will know it.

A Mahapurusha (great Mahatma) has said:

*Tunde` taandavinee ratim vitanute` tundaavaleelabdhaye`,
karnakrodakadambinee ghatayate` karnaarbude`bhyah sprihaam,
che`tah praanganasangino vijayate` sarve`nddriyaanaam kritim,
no jaane` janitaa kiyadbhiramritaih krishne`ti vrnavayee.*

‘When Bhagwan’s name comes into my mouth I wish I could have ten thousand mouths and chant His name with them all. Similarly, when His name comes into my ears, I wish I had ten thousand ears to hear His name with.

I put a *rasagullaa* (ball of cottage cheese immersed in sugar syrup) in my mouth and wanted to spit it out, but even as I spat it out, the syrup reached my throat. It went down my throat and my *mana* (emotional mind) went towards it. Now, the ear does not hear, the eye does not see, the nose does not smell – my whole mana is pulled into the *hridaya* (heart). There, the rasagulla of the naam, the sweetness of the naam, dances on my tongue. Who knows how many kinds of *amrita* (nectars) this naam of Krishna-Krishna is made of! Who knows how many *rasa* (kinds of sweetness) the naam of Rama-Rama is made of!’

You are sitting at a distance from my eyes, but does the light of my eyes go towards you and catch you, or do you come and get into my eyes? Both are *vignaana* (acquired knowledge). Does a picture come into a room or does light go and illuminate it?

All right, see the time it takes for the light of my eyes to observe you – where does your mana stay during that time?

Just extend the naam Ra.....am. Elongate the time you take to utter the name of Rama. There is a gap in between your uttering ‘Ra’ and ‘am’. Where does your mana stay during the time that passes between ‘ra’ and ‘am’? Your mana is *e`kaagra* (single pointed) during that time. You are in a state of Samadhi even though you don’t realize it.

From where is Bhagwan’s naam ‘Krishna’ spoken? The ‘ka’ is uttered from the throat. The ‘ri’ is uttered from the head, the *moordhaa*. Ka = Krishna; both are above the body. This name used the throat to raise the dreaming *jeevaatmaa* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) higher. It took the jeevatma from the moordha to the *sahasraara* (the center of subtle energy at the crown of the head). There, it established, in the form of ‘shna’, in the *samyukta moordhanya* (whole head) – Krishna, Krishna, Krishna.

You would have heard the story of Gajaraj (King of the elephants). Bhagwan set off from Vaikuntha when he uttered ‘Go’, and saved him from the crocodile before he uttered ‘vind’ (Govind is one of the names of Shri Krishna).

Draupadi was being disrobed publicly. She called out to Shri Krishna, ‘*Govinda dvarikaavaasin krishna gopeejanapriya*’ (O Govind, who lives in Dwarka, and is the beloved of the gopis). Before she could complete the sentence, Shri Krishna put aside Satyabhama, put aside the plate of food He was eating from, came to Draupadi, and became her *vastra* (garment). He became such a garment that Dushasan could not pull it off. Bhagwan assumed a Vastra-Avatar to protect Draupadi from being shamed. He became a sari wrapped round Draupadi’s body. Seeing this, a poet felt impelled to write: ‘Is this a *saaree* or is it a *naaree* (lady), or is it a sari?’

Bhagwan manifests as soon as someone takes His name, as soon as someone calls out to Him. Oh, when you have the wish to call Bhagwan – that is where Bhagwan abides. He manifests at once. So, take Bhagwan's naam and do Bhagwan's darshan (see Him). The japa and sankirtan of His name have the power to reveal Him to you, to make Him enthralled!

Jignasa: Does a person get *tattvagnaana* (enlightenment; Gnan about the Tattva – the essence of the Brahman) when he gets Bhagwan's darshan (vision), or does it come later?

Samadhan: You see, Gnan is not an object that is too heavy for Bhagwan to bear its weight! He gives Gnan to those who go to Him for Gnan. He gives wealth to those who go to Him for wealth, and He gives *bhoga* (worldly pleasures) to those who go to Him for bhoga. To those who go to Him for Dharma He gives Dharma, and He gives *pre`ma* (love) to those who go to Him for prema.

Bhagwan does not give Gnan to order, to a *jignaasu* (seeker of knowledge) who comes to Him. He arouses a *vichaara* (profound thought) in the *antahkarana* (subtle body, or fourfold mind) of the person. The person gets Bhagwan's *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) through the meaning of the *mahaa-vaakya* (great statement of the Upanishads) like '*tattvamasi*' (Tat = That, the Brahman, tvam = you, the Atma, asi = is. Meaning, you are the Atma that is the Brahman). Won't Bhagwan do the *baadha* (negation) of His *shreevighraha* (divine form) if He gives Gnan by giving darshan? Meaning, won't it be establishing that this Shrivighraha is *mithyaa* (transient; a relative truth)?

That is why when the Guru gives Gnan through the Mahavakyas like Tattvamasi, the form created by the word – the *brahmaakaara vritti* (mental inclination for the form of the Brahman) – and the one who gives you the *upade`sha* (teaching), are both negated.

However, the feeling of the importance of Bhagwan's Shrivighraha is so strong that it cannot be negated. Therefore, to give the Gnan about the oneness of the *shuddha* (pristine) Atma and the Brahman, even Bhagwan has to use the method of Vedanta. When a shuddha antahkarana becomes eligible, and does Bhagwan's bhakti, then Bhagwan gives him Gnan, provided he wants Gnan.

There is a story in the Upashama-prakaran (section of cessation) of the Yoga Vasishta. After Nrisimha Bhagwan killed Hiranyakashipu, and Prahlad was crowned the Raja of the Daityas (Demons, sons of Diti), they held an assembly.

They came to the decision that it was a son's Dharma to avenge his father's death by killing the person who killed his father. He should fight and conquer his father's killer. 'This is the rule of our *kula* (clan),' they said. 'Prahladji, you will have to conquer Narayana, conquer Bhagwan.'

'Very well,' said Prahlad. The Army was gathered and they set off to attack Vaikuntha. On the way they met an old Brahmin, who was walking with the help of a stick. His body was bent, his skin was wrinkled, and his hair was white. Prahladji asked, 'Maharaj, how can I serve you?' The Brahmin said, 'I do *agnihotra* (worship fire) every day. I want wood. There is a dead tree in the forest. Please have it carried to my hut.'

A couple of Daityas were sent to do this. They could not lift the tree. More were sent, but they also failed. Even two thousand Daityas did not succeed in lifting the dead tree. Ultimately Prahlad went himself. The Brahmin told Prahlad, 'Your Army is not strong enough to lift even a dead tree; how can you gain victory over Narayana?' Prahlad said, 'What you say is true, Maharaj, but I should carry out the Dharma of my clan towards the killer of my father.'

The Brahmin said, 'All right; if you want to gain victory over Narayana it cannot be done by fighting. You should do His *dhyana* (meditate on Him).'

When Prahlad sat in dhyana he became so immersed in the image of Narayana that his body was transformed to Narayana's form. He developed four arms, holding the *shankha*, *chakra*, *gadaa*, *padma* (a conch shell, discus, mace and lotus) like Narayana Bhagwan. The color of his body became dark, like Narayana's. A crown was on his head, and a yellow stole over his shoulder. The only difference was that he did not have Laxmiji and the *bhrigupaada* (footprint of Bhrigu) on his chest. Apart from this, Prahlad became just like the form of Narayana.

When the Daityas saw this, they also began to do Narayana's dhyana. Their forms were also transformed like Prahlad's. The whole Army took on Narayana's form. Innumerable Narayanas were seen on all sides.

When the Devtas (demi-gods) saw this, they felt frightened. 'What will happen to us when these Daityas turn into Narayanas?' they said. (Devtas and Daityas

are natural enemies.) They all went to Narayana Bhagwan. Bhagwan said, 'All right, I will come with you.' He climbed on Garudaji (the giant eagle on whom Bhagwan rides), and came before Prahlad.

The *stuti* (eulogy) Prahlad did of Narayana Bhagwan is excellent! It is a delight to read. The words are beautiful, the meaning is beautiful, and the feeling is beautiful. It has so much *prasaada* (propitiation), so much *oja* (splendor), that the *mana* (emotional mind) gets enrapt when a person reads it.

Narayana was pleased with Prahlad's stuti. 'Ask for a boon, Prahlad,' He said.

'What boon am I to ask from You, Prabhu? Please give me the Gnan You have.'

Narayana said, 'The *kosha* (sheath that covers the Atma within) of your physical body made of food, is the *annamaya kosha* (sheath made of food). The expansion and contraction of this sheath is called the *praanamaya kosha* (the sheath made of vital breath). The desire to expand and contract is called the *manomaya kosha* (the sheath of the emotional mind). The subtle ego of its spreading or shrinking is the *vignaanamaya kosha* (the sheath of acquired knowledge). The pleasure it experiences is the *aanandamaya kosha* (the sheath of pure happiness). You are the *drashtaa* (the one who perceives) of the anand. You are the *saakshee* (witness). I bestow on you, the *viveka* (power of discrimination) of the five koshas, from the annamaya kosha to the anandamaya kosha.'

Now, when Prahlad began to do vivek his attention was shifted from Narayana's dhyana to doing vivek. His form changed to his original form of Prahlad. Narayana went away. Prahlad obtained Tattvagnan through the Mahavakya.

Thus, Gnan is not obtained by *karma* (actions), because karma is not in the category of *pramaana* (proof; something that is established and cannot be negated). It is neither *pratyaksha* (evident), nor *anumaana* (estimated), nor *upamaana* (proved through comparison), nor *shabda* (proved verbally), nor *arthaapatti* (established by its utility), nor *anupalabdhi* (something that should have been there but is absent). Karma does not come into the category of

praman. The *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the *prame`ya* (that, which is established) is achieved through the praman.

That is why when Bhagwan wants to give Gnan to someone, He induces an inclination in that person for obtaining praman; and Tattvagnan is obtained for the removal of *avidyaa* (nescience; believing the transient to be the eternal). Therefore, Tattvagnan is not something that can be picked up from the ground and handed to someone. It can neither be taken nor given. Tattvagnan comes when a person with a shuddha antahkarana does vichar on the oneness of the Atma and the Brahman being established.

Bhagwan's darshan is done by the eyes. There is no doubt that it is possible to get Bhagwan's darshan. Even if there was no Bhagwan, we can do dhyana and create Bhagwan, and get His sakshatkara. However, Bhagwan will give Tattvagnan only to a person who wants Tattvagnan; otherwise, He will give material wealth and power, like He gave to Dhruv. If someone wants to get married Bhagwan will get him married. If someone prays, 'Bhagwan, please send me to London – Paris,' Bhagwan will send him there. However, when it comes to Gnan, Bhagwan will give it only to a person who truly yearns for Gnan; He doesn't give it to others.

Jignasa: In the second canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat Parikshit Maharaj says:

Pravishtah karnarandhre`na svaanaam bhaavasaroruham,

dhunoti shamalam krishnah salilasya yathaa sharat.

Bhagwan comes into the *hridaya* (heart) through the ears, and washes away the dirt in it. What is the purport of this, Maharajshri?

Samadhan: Look, the purport of this is that whoever you see with your eyes in this world, whatever you hear with your ears, whatever you taste with your tongue, and smell with your nose – are the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) of this world. However, if you want to establish in your *hridaya* the One who is not an object of the *indriya* (sense organs), you will have to do *shravana* (listen to, and grasp the purport of spiritual discourses) about Him. There is no other method, except to do shravan about Bhagwan's *mahimaa* (glory), for establishing Him in your heart.

Shravan is the first *saadhana* (method) even if you do bhakti (loving devotion for Bhagwan), because He is your *anamilaa saajana* (the lover you have never met) – you have not seen the one you want to meet. Then, what is the road that leads you to Him? The road, too, is unknown. So, unless you do shravan from someone, you will neither be able to meet Him, nor go towards Him. This is why the first thing that must be done is shravan about Bhagwan.

Even in bhakti, '*shravanam keertanam vishnoh*' (shravan of Vishnu Bhagwan first, and then kirtan – singing His name and glories) makes it clear that shravan is the first step. In Vedanta as well, '*shrotavyo mantavyo nididhaasitavyo*' – first shravan, then *manana* (giving deep thought to what you have heard) and then *nididhyaasana* (bringing the mind back repeatedly to the object of your shravan) is recommended.

That is why shravan is required to obtain the knowledge of that, which cannot be seen, and is beyond the scope of your *mana* (emotional mind). *Bhaava* (the feeling of love and reverence) for the *vastu* (object; Bhagwan) will come after repeated shravan.

They say a man went to meet his friend. He found the door locked from inside. There was no response when he rang the bell. He hammered at the door and called out to his friend, to no avail. He could not enter the house since the door was locked from inside. How was he to go in? He felt worried about his friend. 'He may be ill or unconscious,' he thought. Then he saw that a window on the first floor was open. He climbed up and went in. He saw his friend lying unconscious. He sprinkled water on his face to revive his friend. He brought him something to drink and eat. He cleaned up the room and arranged for medicine for his friend.

In the same way the *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) lies in this body without being conscious of Bhagwan. When we do shravan Bhagwan sits on Garudaji (the giant eagle on whom Vishnu Bhagwan rides) of *shabda* (word) and comes. This shabda is the Garuda that brings Bhagwan to us, and Bhagwan goes into our heart through the route of the ears – '*pravishtah karnarandhre`na.*'

Then, when Bhagwan sees, 'My friend has become very dirty with *kaama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed) and *moha* (infatuation; delusion). I will clean him up,' He decides. When Bhagwan comes into the hriday through the route of the ears, it is like the rivers and lakes becoming limpid when the monsoon is over. The murkiness of a person's mana is removed naturally. Bhagwan has no need to sweep, scrape or polish it. The result of His coming into the hriday is that the *raaga* (attachment) we have for the objects of this world is reduced.

Just tell me, if someone so beautiful, so full of sweetness, so deeply loved manifests in our hriday, will any *pre`ma* (love) remain for the people in this world?

This is why Meera said:

Aise` barakoke` varoon jo janme` aur mara jaaya,

Bara baariye` gopaala joo maahro chudalo amara ho jaaya.

(Why should I marry a man who is born and will die? I will marry Gopal; He is eternal, so I will never be a widow.)

What happens when Bhagwan comes into our hriday? If you have enmity for someone your hriday will become bitter, and if you have attachment for someone, you will forget Bhagwan. That is why all the murkiness of the heart is automatically washed away when Bhagwan comes into it, in the subtle region of the mind. Now, see why '*pravishtah karnarandre*' (enters through the opening of the ears) was said. The opening of our ears cannot be shut. You can close your mouth, and close the door of your house and sit inside, but the ears will remain open. Bhagwan enters the hriday through the opening of the ears. This is why the Shrimad Bhagwat says:

Shrinvanti gaayanti grinantyabheekshanashah

smaranti nandanti tave`hitam janaah,

ta e`va pashyantyachire`na taavakam

bhavapravaahoparamam padaambujam.

If you find a *vaktaa* (one who gives discourses), do shravan. If you find a *shrotaa* (one who listens with a wish to know), describe Bhagwan and His *leelaa* (sport; play). If you don't find either, sing His *bajana* (songs about Bhagwan) to yourself. Children go to a cinema and sing the songs they have heard, in the bathroom, when they come home. They are not bothered about whether anyone listens or not. They sing, 'this heart broke into a thousand pieces; some fell here and some fell there!' Sing about Bhagwan in the same way. Think about Bhagwan with great pleasure.

Look – anand is not in meeting a particular person, nor in any worldly pleasure, or in accumulating wealth. Anand is actually in Bhagwan's shravan, kirtan, humming His name, and thinking about Him. Savor the joy of these activities.

Think about this statement – '*ta e`va pashyanti na anye`*' – they alone get Bhagwan's darshan – '*ta e`va pashyanti na anye`*' – they are the only ones to get Bhagwan's darshan, others don't get it. '*Pashyanti e`va na tu na pashyanti`*' – they are certain to get Bhagwan's darshan; it is not possible that they don't get darshan. '*Achire`naiva na tu chire`na`*' – they get darshan very quickly; there is no delay. And, what happens when we get Bhagwan's darshan? The flow of our mental inclinations is reversed.

Charanadaasa guru kirapaa keenhee,

ulata gayeen mori nayana putariyaa.

(Charanadas' Guru did *kripaa* [showered Grace] and my vision was inverted.)

The inclination to see the outside world, to listen to worldly talk, eat and drink etc changes. Then, we see only Bhagwan, listen only to Him, smell Him, taste Him and hold Him close to our heart. We talk to Him and obtain anand that is beyond description. In this, we don't have to spend anything from our pocket.

So much effort is needed to get worldly objects! You have to accumulate wealth, build a house to your liking, do business in a particular way, resort to telling lies, speak the truth, get married, have children, look after them – only then can you enjoy this world; and there is no certainty about any of these! Mistrust seeps in between a husband and wife, destroying peace and happiness. There are so many kinds of dukha in this world!

When Bhagwan comes and sits in your hriday, however, there is only anand. He will never die. You will never be separated from Him. He will never abandon you, be disloyal, or betray you. So, *preeti* (love) for a Bhagwan like that, and His shravan, gives the highest *mangala* (spiritual good fortune). It frees us from the dukha we suffer in this world.

Jignasa: According to the principle of Karma, everybody gets the *fala* (fruit) of their *karma* (actions; deeds). Not even the Ishwara can change this rule. In that case, what is the fruit of doing *praarthanaa* (prayers)?

Samadhan: My brother, the meaning of doing prarthana is that you obtain that, which you believe to be the most superior. In *praapta* (to obtain), *pra* means *prakrishta* – the most superior; and *arthanaa* means, to ask for. The *praarthee* (one who prays) asks, ‘O Bhagwan, let me get that, which is the best.’

What will be the fruit of this prarthana? The fruit is that repeated prarthana results in your *vritti* (mental inclination) becoming *praarthyaakaara* – the form of the one to whom you pray. The one you pray to will fill your *hridaya* (heart).

Now, when the karma and its fruit come, your *vritti* is *bhavadaakaara* (the form of Bhagwan), so the fruit will wander all round outside. The *nimitta* (cause) of dukha will come. Lightening may strike, and someone can hit you with a stick, or abuse you. Hitting and abusing are karmas; they are also fruits of karmas. They are *bhautika* (of the gross material world). If lightening strikes, it is *daivika* (pertaining to divine forces). There are times when there is a dilemma in the mind about what is the right thing to do.

However, if Bhagwan stays in your *hridaya* (heart), where will the dilemma stay? Where will dukha stay?

This bhakti of Bhagwan – the Bhagavadakara *vritti* – gives no scope for karma-fala to come into a person’s heart.

There are three points in this that you must keep in mind. One is the *nimitta* (cause). For example, if someone abuses you, insults you, or hits you – or you get caught in a storm – or your *mana* (emotional mind) assumes a mistaken understanding, these are all causes of dukha. Our *mana* takes on the form of dukha because of them. It begins to see only dukha. The third point is the subtle ego of thinking, ‘I am dukhi.’

Separate them into three groups. One is the causes of the physical and mental dukha. The second is the vritti of dukha that is always within. The third is the subtle pride of being dukhi.

This pride is caused by foolishness. This dukha is neither external nor internal. It is present only because of the *agnaana* (absence of Gnan), 'I am dukhi.' It will be removed only when agnan is removed. If your heart is filled with loving thoughts of Bhagwan, however, dukha will not come in at all.

Goswami Tulsidasji says:

Mantra mahaamani vishaya vyaala ke`,

me`tata kathina kuanka bhaala ke`.

In his opinion, even the dukha that destiny has written on your forehead can be removed by bhakti. He also says that Shankarji can also change your future.

Bhaavihun me`nta sakahin tripuraaree.

So, if you can't avoid karma-fala by your own efforts, just as you can't cope with gangsters and thieves, you seek help from someone else. In the same way take the *sharana* (refuge) of the greatest helper in Creation, and that is Bhagwan. His power is such that He pushes off the karma done by the *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual).

Even if you feel that Bhagwan can't push off your karma-fala, it makes no difference, because disbelief does not change a fact. Oh, my brother, you used to weep for wealth earlier. You used to say that your karmas were such that you had to weep. Similarly, you wept for your wife, for your son, and for social acclaim. Now, if you weep for Bhagwan's bhakti, you will be weeping for Bhagwan. You should know that weeping for the Beloved is not dukha.

Long ago I had seen a cinema. It was called 'Bharat Milap', or perhaps it was 'Ram Rajya'. Some people had taken me forcibly; I had no inclination for cinemas even when I was young. While watching the cinema I forgot that this is a cinema! Tears came to my eyes when Shri Ramachandra wept for Janakiji. Seeing the anguish of Sri Rama, I felt great distress. When we came out of the cinema the distress vanished. We all felt that it was a very good film.

Once, some of us went to see the Mysore Art Gallery. I saw a painting of the *karuna rasa* (depicting pathos) and tears came to my eyes. When I saw a painting of the *haasya rasa* (depicting something comical) I laughed. A painting of *lalitakalaa* (depicting romance) induced a feeling of sweetness. Some paintings showed the *adbhut* (astonishing), *raudra* (ferocity), *beebhatsa* (horrifying), and *veera rasa* (valor). When we came out we agreed that it was a pleasure to see the paintings.

Weeping for wealth is different, and weeping for Bhagwan is different. When you do Bhagwan's bhakti you will not get the fruit of the principle of Karma. Bhakti will make you weep for Bhagwan, and to weep for Bhagwan is a great *saubhaagya* (spiritual good fortune). It is a great *kripaa* (Grace; compassion) showered by Bhagwan. Bhaktas are always eager and anxious – 'when will tears for Bhagwan come to my eyes?'

*Nayanagaladashrudhaarayaa vadanam gadgadadaruddhayaagiraa,
pulkairnichittam vapuh kadaa tava naamagrahane`bhavishyati.*

'Prabhu, when will that day come into my life when I will be taking Your name, tears will pour down my face, my body will have goose pimples of love for You, and my throat will be choked with emotion?'

Therefore, my brother, the principle of Karma can send dukha; but dukha for whom? We should change the dukha for the feeling, 'what a tragedy that I have had to go through so many lifetimes, but have not got Bhagwan's *darshana* (vision) yet!'

*Aise`hi janama siraane`,
praananaatha raghunaatha son pati taji se`vata purusha viraane`.*

(I wasted my whole life serving others, instead of Raghunath Bhagwan who is the Master of my life.)

If we think like this, we can turn the face of dukha towards Bhagwan.

Those amongst you who are *grihastha* (married householders) will know that it gives pleasure when the beloved gives a loving pinch or bite, or a little smack.

In the same way, when dukha comes, you will know that it is your Beloved behind it. You will also start saying, as Kunti did:

*Vipadah santu nah shashvattatra tatra jagadguro,
bhavato darshanam yatsyaadapunarbhavadarshanam.*

‘Let *vipatti* (misfortune) come into my life repeatedly, because we get Bhagwan’s darshan in *vipatti*. When Bhimsen was being drowned after being given poison, Bhagwan came rushing. When we were trapped in a burning house of wax, He came and saved us. He came when Draupadi was being disrobed in public. He picked up a chariot wheel and ran towards Bhishma to protect Arjuna from Bhishmapitamah’s arrows – *vaa patapeetakee farahana* – with His yellow stole fluttering.’

Thus, the direction of dukha is changed in such a way that dukha becomes a helpful factor in your obtaining Bhagwan. If you do Bhagwan’s bhakti your karma-fala becomes changed from dukha to sukha.

What will you find at the end of dukha? You will find sukha. What will you find at the end of sukha? You will find dukha. This cycle of dukha-sukha continues to go round in this world:

*Chakravat parivartante` dukhaani cha sukhaani cha,
neechairgachhanti अपरि चा दशा चक्राने`मिक्रामे`ना.*

Bhagwan’s bhakti takes *prarabdha* (the fruits of actions of a previous birth) away. The principle of Karma is created on our own strength, whereas bhakti comes from Bhagwan’s *anugraha* (compassion). Nobody has greater power than Bhagwan. Therefore, Bhagwan’s bhakti is essential for defeating the principle of Karma. Bhaktas overcome the principle of Karma.

Jignasa: Maharajshri, in your booklet, 'Bhakti Aur Leela' it is written that if we want to obtain Rama-Krishna we should do their bhakti. That means, a *jeevaatmaa* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) should make an effort to obtain the Paramatma. On the other hand, there are many Sants (Mahatmas) who say that our Atma is the Paramatma. If their statement is true, it becomes bhakti for our own self. Please explain in detail whether the Paramatma abides in the jeevatma, or whether the jeevatma is in the Paramatma.

Samadhan: First, see either one of them. If you keep guessing without seeing them you will not find the answer. You have to reach a conclusion whether the pot is in the clay, or whether the clay is in the pot.

The feeling of *aadhaara* – *aadhe`ya* (the support – that which is supported), and *kaarya* – *kaarana* (the object that is the effect – the cause of the effect) does not exist in the Tattva (the essence, or true form, of the substratum of everything that exists); it is in *kalpanaa* (imagined objects). Clay is clay, whatever form it may be given. If you call it the jeeva, it is a jeeva; and if you call it the Ishwara, it is the Ishwara. First, know that Tattva, then you will see, '*de`hesmin purushah parah*' (*Gita 13. 22*) – it is said that the Supreme Purusha (being) abides in the body.

What is His name? Regarding this, the Gita says:

Upadrashtaa anumantaa cha bhartaa bhokta mahe`shvarah.

(*Gita 13. 22*)

(He is the Maheshwara who observes everything, permits everything, provides everything, and experiences everything.)

This one Paramatma has many names, but there is no multiplicity in Him. Therefore, these questions arise in a state of *agnaana* (absence of Gnan; ignorance about the Atma), whether the Ishwara is in the jeeva, or whether the jeeva is in the Ishwara.

See what Shri Krishna says about this:

Matsthaani sarvabhootaani na chaaham te`shvavasthitah.

(Gita 9. 4)

‘All beings are in Me.’

Therefore, you will see that the Atma of Rama-Krishna and your Atma are not two. They are shown to be two for the purpose of *upaasanaa* (devotional worship).

How are they shown to be two?

It is like a heap of clay. You pick up a little clay, knead it, and make a *paartheeva* (earthen) *linga* (Shivalinga) out of it. You place it on your hand. You make eleven more Rudras (forms of Shiva) from it, worship them, and then do the *visarjana* (offer them up to the elements they are made of) in water. Clay remains clay. By doing puja, your karma becomes *pavitra* (pure, according to the Shastra; the Scriptures). Your *bhaava* (feeling) becomes pavitra. It becomes your upasana. This is the benefit you get. The clay remains clay.

You are *aasakta* (infatuated; strongly attached) to a woman, you are asakta in a man. You have *aasakti* (attachment) for wealth, fame, or a *kurasi* (chair) of position and power. It is a *ku-rasikaa* (a wanton woman) that you get in the morning and is taken away in the evening, but you are attached strongly to it.

You feel very happy if your name is printed in the newspaper today, but you don’t realize that nobody will even remember it tomorrow. And yet, you have asakti for it!

It is for removing these asaktis that asakti for Rama-Krishna is done. When asakti for worldly objects is removed, and you see the matter in some depth, you will find that there is no difference between the Atma and Rama-Krishna.

Therefore, develop your *preeti* (love) for Rama-Krishna in order to become free of your attachment to the objects of this world. When you get preeti for Rama-Krishna you will find no difference between them and your Atma.

Listen to a point of principle. The love a person has for another person is done. It is habitual. At times it is natural. The *pre`ma* (love) you have for yourself is

not done. It is not habitual. It is automatic; innate. Even an ant or a bedbug loves itself. Animals and birds love themselves. Every being has love for itself.

Therefore, as long as you have prema for Bhagwan, considering Him to be another, you will have to do prema. You will have to make it a habit. When you recognize the Paramatma as your Atma, the innate love you have for yourself will become love for the Paramatma.

What I am telling you is a little harsh; it is bitter. You have become completely fragmented without the Paramatma. You have become an object detached from the whole. Just as a drop of sea water dries up when it is separated from the sea, you have become a broken fragment by becoming separated from the Paramatma – the Supreme Atma of all. You are caught up in *jadataa* (inert matter) and *dukha*. You writhe in *dukha*, and end up becoming unconscious, and ultimately you face the suffering of death.

This is because you have become separated from the Paramatma. And, what is the state of the Paramatma because you have become separated from Him? He also lies unconscious! The Paramatma cannot be *chaitanya* (consciousness) without your *chaitanya*, and you cannot be *poorna* (whole; complete in yourself) until you obtain the Paramatma.

Therefore, in order to remove the unconscious condition of the Paramatma, let your *chaitanya* enter into Him; and to remove your lack of wholeness, take the Paramatma's *poornataa* (wholeness; being complete in Himself) into yourself. Take something and give something. Give up something and induce something to be given up. Remove the *upaadhi* (a superimposition connected to something) of both. Then, inside, both are one. Rama-Krishna are no other; the name of our Atma is Rama-Krishna!

However, why should we take the name of only Rama-Krishna? This whole world is also the *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of our Atma.

You read the Gita:

*Yo maam pashyati sarvatra sarvam cha mayi pashyati,
tasyaaham na pranashyaami sa cha me`na pranashyati.*

(Gita 6. 30)

(A person who sees that I pervade all beings in the form of their Atma, and sees all forms in Me, is always seen by Me and always sees Me.)

*Sarvabhooteshu chaatmaanam sarvabhootaani chaatmani,
sarvabhootasthitam yo maam bhajatyekatvamaasthitah.*

(Gita 6. 29)

(A Yogi, who is established in the infinite consciousness that is in all, sees the Atma is all, and that all beings are imagined in the Atma.)

In the same way, '*charam chaacharam eva cha*' (in the moving and unmoving) is given in the thirteenth Chapter of the Gita. That means the *chara* (moving) and the *achara* (unmoving) objects are all the Brahman. Then who do you doubt that Rama-Krishna are the Brahman? What doubt can there be about their being the Brahman, when all beings and even inert matter is the Brahman?

If you see their swarup, and remove the outer covering of matter, you will become one with the Atma of Rama-Krishna; and Rama-Krishna will become one with your Atma. Therefore, there is no reason for opposing upasana.

Understand Bhagwan to be yours, in order to be free of what you believe to be yours in this world. Become Bhagwan's to free yourself of your 'I' (subtle pride of individuality). 'I' and 'mine' are caused by *agnana* (absence of Gnan; ignorance about the Atma). To remove this agnan you have to obtain Gnan of the Parabrahma Paramatma.

: 10 :

Jignasa: Is *dhana-sampatti* (wealth) obtained by *prarabdha* (fruits of actions done in the previous birth that give pleasant and unpleasant fruits), or by *purushaartha* (human endeavor)?

Samadhan: The point is, if you indeed want to get wealth I will tell you the *upaaya* (method); but if it is a casual question, that is a different matter.

Tell me, how many days can you sit with faith in your *prarabdha*? Tell me something about this *aatmabala* (strength of mind) of yours, that your *prarabdha* will give you wealth if you sit with folded hands, waiting for that day to come. Oh, if you stop doing anything at all, Bhagwan will come and do your *se`vaa* (render service), forget about *prarabdha*! Just have a little *bharosaa* (confidence), a little *vishvaasa* (faith) in Bhagwan!

How is wealth obtained? The fan that turns is the special quality of the machine. So is the bulb that lights up. However, it is by Bhagwan's *anugraha* (compassion; Grace) that both are activated. The loudspeaker that magnifies sound, the camera that takes pictures, etc – they are all done by electricity. Like electricity, Bhagwan pervades everything. The special feature is that of our *antahkarana* (fourfold mind – or subtle body – composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality).

You can see the *jaati* (groups; communities; species) that have been created. Where did they come from? They came from *prarabdha*. Your *aayu* (longevity) also comes from your *prarabdha*, and so do the *sukha* and *dukha* that come into your life.

Suppose you have a project for making machines. The engineers will first have to think of a design. The design will be the *jaati*. You want to make the tires of a motor car. The engineers will have to decide how large or small or rounded the tire will be. Similarly, when they plan the number of rotations the tire will have to make, that becomes its *aayu*. They will have to calculate the heat and cold it will stand. Only then will you be able to manufacture a tire. The

engineers will also have to calculate the design of a fan, how long it can whirl; otherwise it will burn out or even catch fire.

Thus the objects you obtain are given by *prarabdha*. This is the decision of the Shastras (ancient books of wisdom; the Scriptures). *Prarabdha* means the actions done in the past. This *shareera* (gross physical form) of ours is created from a portion of our *prarabdha*. However, there is electricity in all, without which nothing can function, and that is called the *Ishwara*.

Can you do new actions and work or not? Suppose two wires were to touch, starting a fire, it would be due to your carelessness. You should do karma. It is karma that has become *prarabdha*, and your new karmas will create a new *prarabdha*. If you steal something you may be caught by the police, either immediately, or in the future.

In the same way, every karma of yours has a *fala* (fruit). And, what if you do something frenzied? What if you kill someone? You will get the fruit immediately. You may be beaten up at once, and you can be sentenced to death. Thus, Karma creates *prarabdha* and *prarabdha* creates *jaati*, *aayu*, and *bhoga* (pleasant and unpleasant experiences). The amount of *dukha* and *sukha* you can endure is also predestined.

Do you know what happened when Lenin became the President of Russia? He was a blacksmith. He came from a very ordinary background. When his mother was shown that her son had become the President of Russia, she felt such a surge of joy that she fainted. Her capacity to feel *sukha* was such that she could not endure the amount of *sukha* the news gave her.

Thus, the appearance of the body, the body's capacity for *sukha* and *dukha*, and its longevity are the three things created by *prarabdha*. Everything else has to be created by our own karmas.

There is one more factor in this. When the *paapa* (sins) and *punya* (spiritual merit earned by good actions) are almost evenly balanced, that is when the *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) gets a human body. This *bhoga* cannot be worked out in any other form like birds, animals, etc. The *jeeva* does not need a *de`vayoni* (the form of a Devta; a Presiding Deity). Only in these

circumstances does a jeeva get a human form, sometimes with a little more of punya and sometimes a little more of paapa in his prarabdha.

As a human you will create a good prarabdha if you do good deeds. A good pile of good prarabdha can be created. However, if you do things that are wrong, you will build up a prarabdha that will give dukha.

Therefore the paapa and punya of this life are certain to attach themselves to you. If you give up your *kartavya* (duty), and don't do the *se`vaa* (rendering service) of your parents, don't earn money to provide for their comforts, don't do Guruji's seva, don't give your wife a comfortable life, you will be a *doshee* (one who has committed an offence). So, to save yourself from *dosha* (offences) and to improve your prarabdha, to purify your antahkarana and to please Bhagwan, you need to do new karmas. Even if you have no desire for wealth, you need to do good karmas for purifying your *hridaya* (heart).

Jignasa: Maharajshri, please tell us something about Shri Vrindavandhaam (*dhaama* means a holy place), and the *mahimaa* (glory) of Shri Yugal Sarkar (Shri Radha-Krishna who are two forms of the same Ishwara).

Samadhan: The first point is: how can we do the puja of that *vyaapaka* (all-pervading), whose length and breadth cannot be measured? We need a place for doing puja. The Paramatma is *nitya* (eternal), *avinaashee* (indestructible); how can His puja be done in Time? A time is needed for this. Similarly, how can we do the puja of the *sarvasvaroop* (one who is all forms)? A *roopa* (form) will have to be chosen for that.

So, separate Vrindavan from the vyapak, and separate the days like Janmashtami, Ekadashi, Akshya Tritiya, Sharad Purnima, Radhashtami etc from Time. And, separate the Shaligram, Shivalinga, *chaturbhuja* (four-armed) and *dvibhuja* (two armed) forms, Radha-Krishna, etc from the sarvaroop. Then you will find Bhagwan for doing puja. The *nishthaa* (staunch faith) for dhaam is such that the people of Vrindavan say:

Vipina raajaseemaake` baahara harihoon ko na nihaara.

(Don't look at even Bhagwan Hari, if He is outside the limit of Vrindavan.)

A bhakta was doing the *parikramaa* (worship by walking round the object of worship) of Vrindavan. He chanted 'Radhe-Shyam, Radhe-Radhe' lovingly, as he walked. Suddenly a wonderful fragrance wafted from the left hand side of the path of parikrama. It came from outside the boundary of Vrindavan. The bhakta turned his face away. Just then he heard the sound of a flute. He heard the tinkling of *ghunghroo* (anklets with tiny bells), but he said, 'No! No! Not there! Come here, to my right!'

Bhagwan said, 'Bhaktaraj, at least look at Me!'

The bhakta said, 'First come to my right hand side. Come within the *seemaa* (limits) of Vrindavan. Then I will look at You. I don't want an outsider Bhagwan.'

This is what nishtha for a dhaam is like. A bhakta desires nothing except the manifestation of *pre`ma* (love) in the dhaam. He wants only the *raja* (dust; earth). He wants the clay of his body to turn into dust and merge into the dust of Vrindavan. A person can take another *naama* (name) and go anywhere, but the dhaam stays where it is.

What am I to tell you about the *vishe`shataa* (special quality) of Vrindavan? There is the famous Mandir of Banke Bihariji. Bihariji was hidden in the ground, in the *raja* of Vrindavan. He called out to His bhakta Haridas Maharaj, 'Haridas, I am hidden here. Bring Me out.' Thus, in Vrindavan it is not the bhakta who calls out to Bhagwan; it is Bhagwan who calls out to His bhaktas! This is the mahima of Vrindavan.

In Vrindavan Bhagwan told His bhakta, 'Please don't give Me only salt and *roti* (unleavened bread). Give me *dahi-vadaa* (dumplings in curds).' The bhakta rebuked Bhagwan. 'You are a great *chatoraa* (glutton)!' Similarly, everywhere else, Bhagwan's hand is higher, because he gives to His bhaktas, but in Vrindavan His land is lower, because He takes from His bhaktas. Here, Bhagwan goes round asking, 'Give Me *maakhana-roti* (butter and roti), give Me *dahi* (curds) and *doodah* (milk), give me *maakhana-misri* (butter-candy sugar).'

The gopis tell Him, 'Don't look at me.' Bhagwan tells them, 'All right; I won't look at you. I want your *najara* (najar can mean a glance, or regard).'

So, this is what the *leelaa* (divine play) of Vrindavan is like. Shri Krishna plays the flute if nobody looks at Him. If this fails, He dances. If even that fails, He throws a pebble at the person. If even that does not succeed in catching the person's attention, He pulls at her *aanchala* (corner of her sari). This is His leela that He does at Vrindavan. His leela at Vrindavan is *adbhut* (amazing)!

Just think of it – five thousand years have passed since Shri Krishna's Avatar. What a long period of time this is. However, there is a village there, called Barasana (where Radharani lived), and there is another village called Nandagaon, where Shri Krishna lived. Even today, the people of Barasana believe that a girl of their village is married into the family of Nanda Baba in Nandagaon. Even today a villager of Barasana would rather die of thirst than drink the water of Nandagaon, because of the old custom that people would

not eat or drink at the village into which one of their daughters was married. 'This is the village our daughter is married into,' they say. Tell me, is there any other place in the world that continues with a relationship of that kind for five thousand years?

Oh my brother, 'Bhagwan is my son, He is my friend, He is my husband, He is my *pati* (husband; Master); no! no! He is my *jaara* (illicit lover)!' Worship Him with the feeling of any relationship – this is the message of Vrindavan. Even today, there is Radha Raman, who had manifested from a Shaligram (a round stone worshipped as Bhagwan Vishnu).

One Maharani had come to Vrindavan. She asked a bhakta, 'Please tell me the name of the form of Bhagwan you worship. I will get a *poshaaka* (dress and decorations) made for Him.' Gopal Bhatt told her, 'Bring whatever kind you want.' His Bhagwan was round (Shaligram), kept in a small box. At night he began to cry. 'When the Rani brings the poshak in the morning, how will I make Bhagwan wear them? Which shirt will come? How will I tie the *mukuta* (crown) on Him?' When the Maharani came with the poshak, the box splintered. The Shaligram remained in the midriff. Bhagwan's *mukhaaravinda* (lotus-like face) manifested on top. A flute appeared in His hands, and feet appeared below. Bhagwan wore the poshak brought by the Maharani. That is Vrindavan's Radha Raman.

Now, what is Vrindavan's Radha Vallabh like? It is said that a Brahmin named Harivansha became *mugdha* (entranced) by Him. 'I will take You to Khatauli,' he said. Bhagwan said, 'Get married. Only then will I go with you.' Harivanshaji said, 'Prabhu! I am a *virakta* (one who has renounced the world). I am a Sadhu. How can I get married?' Bhagwan said, 'In that case, I won't go with you. I will go with you only if you get married.' Harivanshaji broke his vow of renunciation and got married. Only then did Bhagwan come to Vrindavan with him!

There is a place in Vrindavan called Seva Kunj. Nobody stays there at night. There is another place, Nidhi Van, where Bhagwan presses the feet of His bhaktas. Thus, there are such leela of *rasa* (sweet emotion) in Vrindavan that even a person who is engrossed in worldly matters gets enchanted.

The teaching about *pre`ma`* (love) given in schools and colleges is not *asala* (unadulterated). It is a lesson in *kaama* (desire; lust) and *bhoga* (sensual pleasure). Vrindavan is a dhaam where you can see real prema even today. Someone said, ‘Bhaktaji, take this – offer it as *bhoga* (food) to your Bhagwan.’ The bhakta said, ‘How can my delicate Bhagwan eat anything bought from a shop? Ram-Ram! He is never offered anything purchased from the market place.’ Such things are heard in Vrindavan even today! This is the mahima of Vrindavan.

When you go to bed at night you can hear ‘Radhe-Shyam! Radhe-Shyam’ all round. You will hear a flute being played. There are the cows that Bhagwan took for grazing. There are trees in which He sat, with His legs dangling. There are the *gopi* (milkmaids) He flirted with, and it is the same raja in which He rolled!

Go to the land of Vrindavan with *bhaava* (love and reverence) once. Let go of your *rajo-guna* (worldly tendencies), and roll in the raja – the dust of Vrindavan – with *vishvaasa* (staunch faith). Look; raja is neither eaten, nor worn, nor used to give warmth to the eyes. Nor is it used for filling the ears. Have prema for the raja of Vrindavan, and see the anand of Vrindavan. Your *hridaya* (heart) will become *nishkaama* (free of worldly desires), *ujjvala* (luminous), *nirmala* (unsullied), and it will shine. In Vrindavan you don’t have to make an effort to meet Bhagwan; Bhagwan makes an effort to meet His bhaktas! This is the *bhoomi* (earth; land) of Vrindavan!

: 12 :

Jignasa: How important is the *adhyayana* (study) of the Shastras (Scriptures; ancient books of wisdom) for obtaining Bhagwan?

Samadhan: Some people do the adhyayan of the Shastras with the purpose of getting married, in order to achieve the *kaama purushaartha* (Kama means fulfillment of desire; Purushartha means human endeavor), and also to obtain wealth. This cannot be accepted as a lofty goal. Such a notion is not even a *sthoola* (solid) *aalambana* (support) for obtaining the Paramatma. This method will take you to the goal you wish to attain.

The method of our Vedic culture is:

Braahmane`na nishkaaranam shadango ve`dodhye`yo ve`dashcha.

The meaning of this is that the study of the Vedas and the six branches of learning – like vyakaran, nirukta, chanda, jyotish, kalpa etc – in addition to all the Vedas should be undertaken with the feeling that it is our duty. This gives *antahkarana shuddhi* (purifies the antahkarana or fourfold mind, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and *ahankaara* = the subtle pride of individuality), and jignasa about the Paramatma, and then Gnan about the Paramatma.

If you do adhyayan of the Shastras with a *sakaama bhaava* (the feeling that this adhyayan will fulfill some worldly desire), the Shastras are a *kalpavriksha* (wish-fulfilling tree). They will also give you the *sansaara* (worldly objects). However, when the adhyayan is done for obtaining the Paramatma, the person attains the Paramatma.

There is a little story in the Upanishads about a conversation between the Sanat Kumars and Naradji. It is worth reading. Naradji named all the Shastras he has studied – ‘*rigve`do bhagavaan yajurve`deeyam saamave`dam atharvaangiarasam*’ – and described how he had studied them. Then he said, ‘*Soaham bhagavaan shochaami shokasya param paaram paarayatu bhagavaan*’ – even after studying so many Shastras I am caught up in *shoka* (sorrow). Please help me to cross over this shoka.’

Thus, studying many Shastras is not an alamban for obtaining the Paramatma. There have been Mahatmas who have not studied any of the Shastras. You people would have heard the name of Paramhansa Ramakrishna. You would also have heard of Ramana Maharshi and Anandamayi Ma. In my opinion there have been many such Mahatmas who did not undertake adhyayan of the Shastras at all.

The Gayatri Mantra is the essence of the Shastras, if a person is a Brahmachari (celibate student), Grihastha (married householder), or Vanaprastha (retired person), who has a spiritual goal he should do adhyayan of it. And, the *pranava* (Oum) is the essence of the Gayatri Mantra.

The Upanishad says:

*E`tadaalambanam shre`shtham e`tadaalambanam param,
e`tadaalamanam gnaatvaa yo yad ichchhasi tasya tat.*

The Omkara is the highest alamban, the Supreme support.

It is also stated:

*Omiti aatmaanam yunjeeta,
omiti aatmaanam upaaseet,
naanudhyaayaad bahoon shabdaan,
vaacho viglaapaname`tad.*

One should not do the adhyayan of many *shabda* (words) because the words that are spoken will gradually reduce the *shakti* (power) of the tongue. The tongue's power gets scattered. The word Om is composed of three syllables – a-o-m. They should be gathered and used to direct the three states of *jaagrita* (the waking state), *svapna* (the dreaming state) and *sushupti* (the deep sleep state) to obtain the knowledge about the fourth state of *tureeya* (when the individual consciousness merges into the Brahman). The Shastras are many, and there are many obstacles in their adhyayan; and the time we have is limited – '*svalpashcha kaalo bahvashcha ve`daah.*'

Apart from this there are many different opinions of the Rishis (Seers). If a person gets caught in the debates of different opinions – whether Gautam-Kanad are right, whether Kapil-Patanjali are right, or whether Gemini-Vyasa are right – nobody will be able to come to any conclusion.

Then, there are the following schools of the Shakta (worshippers of Shakti), Shaiva (worshippers of Shiva), Ganapat (worshippers of Ganesh), Kashmiri Shaivas, and others. There is no end to be found. Therefore the Shastras should be folded up and, ‘*Yat saarabhootam tadupaasitavyam*’ – you should do the *upaasanaa* (devoted worship) of their *saara* (quintessence).

There was a Mahatma at Kashi (Benares) – Dayalu Puriji. He would have a Shastra Samadhi. He would sit in the middle, with piles of books on all sides, and he would get the *sfoorana* (pulsation of thoughts) about what is written in the Shastras. I have seen a number of Mahatmas who did the *upaasanaa* (loving worship) of Devtas (Presiding Deities; Divine Powers) and get sfooran of the Shastras. They were able to tell what is written in a specific line on a specific page of a specific book!

So, one is the alamban of the Shastra. Alamban takes us from the multiplicity to the One. The other is *nissankalpataa* (having no resolve or inclination at all). The *vyavahaara* (interaction) with the Shastra, social interaction, *pramaana* (something that establishes a fact), *prame`ya* (that, which is established) etc must be put aside.

The method of ‘*ne`ti ne`teeti vaakye`na she`shitam yat param padam*’ – not this – not this; negating everything that is not the Atma, should be used to establish yourself in your own *svaroopaa* (essence; Self).

Nirastasarvasankalpaa yaa shilaavadavasthiti,

jaagrinnidraavinirmuktaa saa svaroopasthiti paraa.

No *sankalpa* (resolve) should rise in the *mana* (emotional mind). You should sit as unmoving as a rock, but you should not be asleep. This is called a *svaroopasthiti* (a state of being established in your Self). However, this is a *sthiti* (state); even this is not called *bodha* (comprehensive knowledge).

*Jadataam varjayitvaa shilaayaam hridayancha yat,
amanastam mahaabaaho tanmayo bhava sarvadaa.*

Let go of the *jadataa* (inertness) of the *de`ha* (body) and this material world. Give up everything that is *drishya* (perceived, as being separate from the Atma that perceives) and *prakaashya* (illuminated by the consciousness of the Atma), and sit in a state like a stone that has no thought. The Shastras describe living in such a state. The *drishya* has never been created; it has no existence – ‘*idam jagat aham che`te`* - the jagat that is perceived is, in fact, the Atma.’

*Aatmaive`dam sarvam, brahmaive`dam sarvam,
sa eve`dam sarvam, ahame`ve`dam sarvam.*

(Everything is the Atma, everything is the Brahman, know that the Atma is the Brahman.)

This is how *aatmachintana* (meditating on the Atma) is defined in the Upanishad.

Everything that is *drishya* has to be negated before you get *bodha* (comprehensive understanding), before you get Gnan, and then you should establish yourself in your swarup, as instructed by the Shastras. You must become free of all resolves and inclinations. Once you get *bodha* your *jagrita* – *svapna* – *sushupti*; moving-sleeping – dreaming – everything is the Atma. Nothing exists, except the Atma. Because of obtaining this *bodha* you obtain *aatma-drishhti* (the viewpoint of the Atma; seeing everything as not being separate from the Atma). This *Atmadrishti* is always with you, but because of *agnaana* (absence of Gnan about the Atma) it seems to be missing. The *Atmadrishti* becomes self-established as soon as *agnan* is removed.

Now, consider this – all the *vyavhar* about the *pramaana-prame`ya* (the proof or factor that establishes – the object that is established) that is done in the *jagrita* state – what is it? In this, *pratyaksha* (evident), *anumaana* (estimated), *upamaana* (known through comparison), *shabda* (words), *arthapatti* (inference), *anupalabdhi* (the absence of something that should be present) – some people believe it a little less, and some people believe it a little more.

The relationship between the praman-prameya is that these are things we know through these different methods of establishing their existence. For example, we know the appearance through the eyes. We see smoke and understand that it is caused by a fire. We see a cow and know that there is milk. This is the method of the praman-prameya.

However, both praman and prameya become *mithyaa* (a relative truth; something transient) in the dreaming state. In a deep sleep state the vyavhar of the praman-prameya merges into agnan. The vyavhar of praman-prameya is blocked during a Samadhi. A person in a Samadhi is not connected to them in any way. We have the *anubhava* (experience) of being the *saakshaat* (incarnate) *drashtaa* (the Atma that is the uninvolved witness).

So, the *svapna avasthaa* (deep sleep state) serves the purpose of showing us that the vyavhar avasthaa (the waking state of interaction) is mithya. The sushupti avasthaa serves the purpose of showing agnan; we have no connection with it. Samadhi shows us *asangataa* (to be unconnected). The bodha that the Atma is the Brahman, that it is *adviteeya* (non-dual), serves the purpose of showing us that the praman-prameya have no real existence. The Atma-swarup is the only thing that exists.

The *vidambanaa* (irony; vexing factor) is that we consider only the waking state to be the most important. We give importance only to this state.

Therefore, if you want to take the alamban of the Shastras to remove agnan, that is very good. If you want to sit in a state that is free of all sankalpas, you have to stop thinking about the sansara. If you obtain Atmadrishti – *sovata baithata pade`uthaane`, kaha kabeera hum vahee thikaane`* – you are where you are, in your true Self, your Atma.

Thus, the alamban of the Shastras is the alamban of the shabda, although Yogis consider it to be a *vikshe`pa* (disturbance). If the shabda is related to Bhagwan, bhaktas consider it to be a remover of *raaga-dve`sha* (attachment-aversion). The *dharmaatmaa* (those who follow the rules of Dharma) believe the Shastras to be the proof that establishes *vidhi-nishe`dha* (should be done – should not be done). The Vedantis consider the Shastras to be useful in the purification of

the *tat-tvam padaartha* (the substance Tat = That, the Brahman, tvam – you, the Atma are one) in the meditation of the meaning of the shabda.

Ultimately, if someone becomes free of *sankalpa-vikalpa* (resolves-alternatives) even without the knowledge of the Shastras – or, he gets Atmagnan – he remains in the Atmadrishti. Therefore, the *vichaara* (profound thought) about it is beautiful. As far as possible, we should endeavor to be established in our swarup.

Jignasa:

*Kim svidaadityamunnayati ke`cha tasyaa mitashcharaah,
kashchainamastam nayati kasminshcha pratishthati.*

What is the *upade`sha* (teaching) of Dharma in this? Please explain its purport.

Samadhan: You see, Yaksha had placed many questions to Yudhishtira. Yudhishtira's brothers – Bhimsen, Arjuna, Nakul and Sahdev – had gone before. They had not been able to answer the questions Yaksha had placed, and had died. Ultimately, Yudhishtira went himself. Yaksha asked his questions, and Yudhishtira had given the answers. There are many questions in this episode, but here, only the meaning of Dharma is what the question is about.

*Dharmo vishvasya jagatah pratishthaa,
loke`dharmishtham prajaa upasarpanti,
dharme`na paapam apanudati,
dharme`sarvam pratishthitam,
tasmaat dharmam paramam vadanti.*

This mantra is from the Veda. The meaning of this is that the world that is perceived – the world of moving and unmoving objects – where is its *stithi* (state; position)? Where is its *pratishthaa* (stability)? What is it sustained by?

It is sustained by Dharma.

When there is a *dharmaatmaa* (a person who lives by the rules of Dharma) everybody has faith in him; they trust his word. People do *se`vaa* (render service) to a person who leads a life of righteousness. *Paapa* (sin) is destroyed by doing *dharmaanushthaana* (rituals prescribed by Dharma). Everybody's *pratishtha* is in Dharma, therefore, it is Dharma that is the *parama tattva* (supreme essence).

According to *vyaakarana* (grammatical analysis) the word Dharma has two direct derivatives – *dharati iti dharmah*, *dhri dhaarana-poshanayoh*. That, which does our *dhaarana* (sustains; upholds) and *poshana* (nourishes) is called Dharma.

The other meaning of Dharma is the Ishwara.

Apart from these, there are no other words that are the *bodhaka* (giving comprehensive understanding) of the word Dharma.

These days, there is talk about the Muslim Dharma, the Sikh Dharma, the Christian Dharma etc. These are Dharmas that have been founded by their respective Acharyas (Teachers, Masters). They are given in some books or traditions. They have *kaarya-kalaapa* (actions – activities) that are undertaken, or forbidden, according to the statements of their Acharyas. The word Dharma is also used in this context. In our Shastras, no other word is attached to the word Dharma.

Yatoabhudayanihshre`yasasiddhih sa dharmah.

There is nothing before the word Dharma – neither Arya, nor Hindu, nor Vedic. Dharma is an independent thing. '*Yathaato dharmajignaasaa*' (an enquiry about Dharma). The word Dharma is connected to neither Arya (refined) nor Hindu, nor any other. All these are small Dharmas. Hindu, especially, is not a *majhaba* (a religion founded by an Acharya). For example, Islam is a majhab that was founded by Mohammed Saheb on the basis of the Koran Sharif. Christianity was founded after Jesus Christ, based on the Bible.

Our Dharma, however, has not been founded by any person, in any period of time, or based on a book written by anybody. Dharma is the name of the *saakshaat* (incarnate) Parameshwara, and it is *sarvoparee* (above everything).

Dharateeti dharmah' – Dharma is the name of that Parameshwara who protects us and sustains us. Please listen carefully. I am purposely elaborating a little on this.

A man who keeps a *chotee* (tuft of slightly longer hair kept by Brahmin men) is also *dhaarmika* (a person who obeys Dharma), and a person who doesn't keep

a choti is also a Dharmik. A Grihastha (married householder) will keep a choti; a Sanyasi won't. A Brahmin will wear a *yagnopaveeta* (sacred thread), but a Shudra (labor class) won't. Some will do *moorti-poojaa* (worship an idol); some won't. Some will believe the Ishwara to be *saakaara* (with form) and some will believe Him to be *niraakaara* (formless). Some will consider the cow to be sacred and some won't. Some people get married according to the rites of Dharma; some have a love marriage. There are some seventy five methods of marriage in Bharat (India). At some places, there is a fight between two men. The winner wins the bride. At some places the bride invites someone to marry her, and they get married. So, this extension of our Dharma is not a majhab; it is a form of the sakshat Ishwara.

This is why Dharma takes on the form of Brahma (the Creator), and comes into our *mana* (emotional mind).

Mano naama manushyasya virinchyaakaaradhaarinah.

First our mana becomes Brahma. Then it raises the Surya (sun; source of illumination). All our *indriya* (five sense organs and five organs of action), and our *monovritti* (mental inclinations) are Devtas. They are presiding Deities, or divine powers. The eye is a Devta, the ear is a Devta, the skin is a Devta, and the nose is a Devta. They all hover close to the Surya that gives illumination. Dharma is the *sanchaalaka* (one who makes everything move; the manager) of this *vyavahaarika prakaasha* (the effulgence that enables interaction), and of the Surya of the *srishti-sthiti-pralaya* (creation-sustenance-dissolution). That is why, with regard to the connection with Satya (a truth that can never be negated), it is said, '*Satyam vadantam dharmam vadati iti aahuh.*' Meaning, a person who speaks Satya is said to be one who speaks Dharma.

What is Satya? Satya is that, which is not negated in Time. Satya is that, which does not change in place, whether it is in our country or a foreign land. Satya is that, in which differences of 'I – you', 'this – that' do not exist. Therefore, where is the Surya *pratishthita* (established; stable)? It is in Satya. Satya is where the Surya stays, and the cause of its rising and setting is *dharmadharma* (Dharma – that, which is contrary to Dharma). It is Dharma that sustains the Surya. The Surya is called the *aajaana de`vataa* (the Devta of a high origin).

*Adabhyaa sambhrittyaa prithivyaa rasaachcha vishvakarmanaa
samavartataagre` tasya tvashtaa vidadhad roopame`ti tasya.*

It is Dharma that rules the Surya. Dharma is such a great thing that the Surya rises and sets as directed by Dharma. And, its pratishtha is in Satya, in the Parabrahm Paramatma.

Jignasa: According to the principle of Karma everybody has to endure the *fala* (fruits) of their good and bad *karma* (actions; deeds). Some karmas give the *fala* immediately, and some in due course. Good karmas do not negate bad ones. Some have to be endured when the *jeevaatmaa* (the Atma attached to a body, which lives on and accepts rebirth in another form) goes to another *yon*i (species) when he is reborn. This is why a human being has to take many births, and he does not get Moksha (liberation from the cycle of rebirth). How can we become free of the *karma-bandhana* (bondage of the fruits of our karmas)?

Samadhan: The first point is, give up doing bad karmas. *Saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress) begins with this. The sadhana of a person who does not give up wrong karmas will never be successful.

Kaama-krodha-lobha-moha (desire-anger-greed-deluded thinking) are born when *vaasanaa* (avid desire) becomes intense. They push us to wrong karmas. Lobha leads to stealing, kama to immoral acts, krodha to *himsa* (violence), and moha to partiality and injustice. Therefore, the first condition for becoming free of karma-bandhan is to give up bad karmas.

What will happen if you do good karmas with a *saakaara bhaava* (desire for worldly benefits)? You will get the desired object, and then you will do more karmas. Then you will again get what you desire, and do more karmas. This will become a pattern. You will not become free of karma-bandhan. Therefore, the second condition is that you should remove *kaamanaa* (worldly desire) from your karmas.

The third condition is that you should not have the *abhimaana* (pride) of being the doer. Bhagwan has said this several times in the Gita.

Prakrite`h kriyamaanaani gunaih karmaani sarvashah.

(3. 27)

(All karmas are done by the three gunas – tendencies – of Prakriti, the Ishwara's power of Creation. These tendencies fluctuate. They are innate in all beings.)

Prakriti e`va cha karmaani kriyamaanaani sarvashah.

(13. 29)

(A person who sees that it is Prakriti that is the doer of all karmas sees the truth.)

Karmas are done by the gunas of Sattva (the lofty tendency that gives right thinking), Raja (the mixed tendency that gives worldly goals), and Tama (the lowly tendency that gives sloth and deluded thinking). Karmas are done by Prakriti. *Svabhaavastu pravartate`* – karmas are done according to the nature of a person.

Yadahankaaramaashritya na yotsya (Gita 18. 59)

(If you are taking the refuge of *ahankaara* – the subtle pride of individuality – saying, 'I will not fight')

Prakritistvaam niyokshyati (Gita 18.59)

(your very nature will make you fight.)

Svabhaavaje`na kaunte`ya (18. 60)

(O son of Kunti, your nature, your svabhava will make you fight.)

These, and other statements show that karmas are done by Prakriti, by a person's svabhava, and also the *panchaayattee* (done by the five) karmas.

Adhishthaanam tathaa kartaa karanancha prithagvidham,

nyaayam vaa vipareetam vaa panchaite` tasya he`tavah. (Gita 18. 14)

(This *adhishthana*, meaning, the refuge under which the karma is done – the karta, the organs of action and the different efforts, and the fifth cause that is the subconscious impressions created by karmas – both good and bad – done in the past.)

These five factors are given here also establish that the Atma is not the karta; the Ishwara is the karta. So let go of the *kartaapana* (pride of being the karta).

Eeshvarah sarvabhootaanaam hridde'she`rjuna tishthati. (Gita 18. 61)

(The Ishwara abides in all hearts. He uses His Maya – His power of illusion – to activate people the way different machines are activated by electricity.)

The meaning of all this is that our *nitya-shuddha-buddha-mukta* (eternal-pure-enlightened-liberated) Atma is not the karta.

The fourth condition is that you give up all the worldly things from which you derive *sukha* (happiness, pleasure, satisfaction), of which you become the *bhoktaa* (the one who experiences, enjoys or suffers). Don't make yourself a bhokta.

The conclusion is that you give up forbidden actions, give up kamana, give up kartritva, and give up *bhoktritva* (the feeling of being a bhokta).

After that, remove the *agnaana* (lack of Gnan about the Atma) that is the cause of these feelings. When this is done, you will see that there is no karma-bandhan for you. You will become Mukta when your agnan is removed.

However, if you continue to do bad karmas, continue to be dishonest, and say, 'I am not the karta,' – if you do *vyabhichaara* (adultery) and say, 'I am not the karta,' – if you do *himsaa* (violence) and say, 'I am not the karta,' you can chant the name of the Ishwara, or give the *upade'sha* (teaching) of Vedanta or the Gita, your wrong karmas will press you down; you will not be spared.

There was a Seth (wealthy businessman). He had a beautiful garden made, a beautiful house built, he organized a *pyaasoo* (free drinking water for the public), and an *annakshe`tra* (free food for the poor) on a daily basis. He would walk in his garden every morning. One day an animal wandered into the garden and he killed it with his stick. The *hatyaa* (sin of killing) manifested, to attach itself to the Seth. The Seth said, 'Oh, I have not killed this animal; it was this stick that killed it.' Hatya went to attach itself to the stick. The stick said, 'It was the hand that moved me. I do not move of my own volition. Get attached to the hand.'

When Hatya moved towards the hand, it said, 'My Devta (presiding deity) is Indra. I move by his power. Get attached to him.' Indra told Hatya, 'All actions are prompted by Brahma, who is seated in the *antahkarana* (the subtle body, or fourfold mind, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclination, and *ahankaara* = the subtle pride of individuality), so get attached to Brahma, not to me.' Brahma said, 'I am *adheena* (dependent) on Vishnu, so attach yourself to Him.'

Poor Hatya went to Vishnu Bhagwan. 'All right, Hatya,' said Vishnu Bhagwan. 'Just wait a little.' He assumed the form of an old Brahmin. 'Become My servant, and come with Me,' He told Hatya. He walked into the garden, supporting Himself with a stick, and went to the Seth who was sitting on a bench. 'Oh, you have organized an annakshetra, Seth. That is a work of great *punya* (spiritual merit earned by good deeds),' He said.

'Yes, Maharaj,' replied the Seth. 'I have kept good cooks to do the cooking. I get good quality grain, get it cleaned thoroughly and even the condiments used are of the best quality.'

'What about the pyau?' asked Bhagwan.

'Oh, I have the water cooled nicely before it is served,' said the Seth.

'This garden of yours is indeed very beautiful,' said Bhagwan.

'Yes, Maharaj, I am very fond of roses. I have got a thousand varieties procured from different places. I personally supervise their care.'

'And this grand house?' asked Bhagwan.

'I got it made Maharaj. I imported Italian marble for the flooring.'

'That is very good,' said Bhagwan. 'However, Seth, there is a dead animal lying here. How did it die?'

'Maharaj, it died by its own *prarabdha* (fate created by actions done in the previous life).'

Bhagwan said sternly, 'Look Seth, you say that you have organized the annakshetra and the pyau, you have had the garden and the house built. And, you say it is not your hand that killed the animal; that it was not killed by your stick? You didn't kill the animal? The policy of taking credit for good deeds and refusing to accept the bad ones is not acceptable in this Creation. You killed this animal knowingly. Therefore, Hatya will get attached to you.'

So, my brother, please keep in mind once again, about how to become free of karmas. Give up wrong actions. Then, give up kamana. Then, give up kartritva, and then give up *bhoktrittva* (the pride of being a bhokta). Ultimately, you should obtain Tattvagnan – Gnan about the Atma and the non-dual Brahman being one. After that, you will see that you are the nitya-shuddha-buddha-mukta swarup. Moksha is eternally yours. You obtain that, which has always been with you. And, the *nitya nivritti* (becoming free of that of which you have always been free) *sansaara* (interactive world) is obtained.

Therefore, we should go on the path of Tattvagnan if we want to be free of karma-bandhan. And, for this, we should give up all actions that are forbidden and wrong. Only then can we be free.

Jignasa: How can we obtain *ananya* (undivided) bhakti for Bhagwan?

Samadhan: Look, it is a straightforward matter. You will obtain ananya bhakti if you give up bhakti for the *anya* (others). The 'an' that is attached to 'anya' bhakti indicates negation. The meaning is, give up bhakti for any *anya*; for any other.

One meaning is bhakti is *pre`ma-poorvaka se`vaa, bhaja se`vaayaam* – to serve with love. Another meaning is *bhajanam bhaktih, bhanjo aamardane` bhaktam*. The grain pounded in a pestle is called 'bhaktam'. Rice is called bhaktam because it is pounded. The chaff is removed before the rice is cooked.

That means, the rice should be *nirmala* (free of impurities) and *ujjavala* (white). Secondly, it should not be broken into pieces; the grains should be whole – it should be *akshata* (entire). The third point is that it should be *raseelaa* (juicy) – it should be cooked. If the grains are reddish in color, you should sprinkle a little buttermilk on it when you cook it; it will become white. Not a single grain should be hard – there should be no *abhimaana* (pride) in a bhakta. Abhiman has a *kana* (granule). The rice should not be over-cooked; every grain should remain separate, white and soft. This is called 'bhaktam' in Sanskrit. When the same root is *ta* as an affix, it becomes *bhanjanam bhaktih*.

Hari son jori sabani son toryo, mein apano mana hari son joryo.

(I attached my mana to Hari and detached it from all others. My mana is attached only to Hari.)

Hari son joryo became *bhaj se`vaayaam*, and *sabani son toryo* became *bhanjo aamardane`*. This is called bhakti. And, the one in whose heart this bhakti stays is called a bhakta.

Now, who is the bhakti for? Even Sethji (a wealthy businessman) has bhakti, but where is his bhakti? He folds his hands to Hanumanji and does His *poojaa* (ritual worship) every day. For what? 'Oh Hanumanji, please keep sending me gold and silver, diamonds and pearls, and also send me notes.' This is not

bhakti for Hanumanji. The Seth has *pre`ma* (love) for wealth, and he wants to make Hanumanji the medium of obtaining the objects he loves.

The Rajas of yore would keep a *kutanee* (brothel) to call some girl or wife to him. Similarly, you take the support of a Devta to obtain some other object, and the Devta becomes a *maadhyama* (medium). You are a *se`vaka* (servant), a bhakta, but of which level?

Vanchaka bhagata kahaayi raamake`, kinkin kanchana koha kaamake`.

Whose bhakta are you – a bhakta of wealth or a Devta? Now, proceed on this subject – there is bhakti for the Country, bhakti for the mother and father, and also bhakti for the Devta – ‘*ye`apyanayade`vataabhaktaah.*’ This, however, is not Anaya bhakti. When bhakti is for only the Paramatma, that is ananya bhakti.

Maam cha yoavyabhichaare`na bhaktiyoge`na se`vte`.

(Gita 14. 26)

(A person who does My bhakti with avyabhichari Bhakti Yoga is always attached to Me.)

Mayi chaananya yoge`na bhaktiravyabhichaarinee.

(Gita 13. 10)

(Have bhakti for Me alone. Remain constantly attached only to Me.)

Bhaktyaa maamabhijaanaati.

(Gita 18. 55)

(Know Me through bhakti.)

Madbhaktim labhate`paraam.

(Gita 18. 54)

(He gets My supreme bhakti.)

Bhakti is described in the thirteenth, fourteenth and eighteenth chapters of the Gita. It is written in the thirteenth chapter, '*Madbhakta e`tad vignaaya madhaavaayopapadyate`*', meaning, you will obtain ananya Bhakti-Yoga. You will always be attached to Bhagwan through your bhakti for Him when your bhakti is for Him alone and no other.

There is a story in the Puranas. There was a great Shiva bhakta called Upamanyu. When his *tapasya* (asceticism) was completed, Bhagwan Shankar did a *leelaa* (divine play). He turned His bull Nandi into Airavat, the elephant of Indra. He turned His *trishoola* (trident) into a *vajra*, thunderbolt used by Indira, and He assumed the form of Indra, the Raja of Swarga. He manifested thus before Upamanyu. 'Bhaktaji, ask for a boon,' He said.

Upamanyu saw that it was not Shankar Bhagwan who had manifested. He folded his hands and said: 'Indraji,

Api keeta patango vaa bhava`yam shankaraagnayaa,

na tu shakra tvayaa dattam trailokyamapi kaamaye`.

'If Shankarji makes me a worm or moth, I am ready for it, but from you I don't want even the Kingdom of all three worlds.'

This is the *nishthaa* (staunch faith) Upamanyu had for Shankarji.

The definition of *ananyataa* (being ananya) of the people of Vraja (the area round Vrindavan) is very appealing. The leela of Vraja is different from the leela of *tribhuvana* (the three worlds – Heaven, Earth, and Hell). In Vraja they sing, '*teeni lokate` mathuraa nyaaree. Jo rasa barasa rahyo barasaane` so rasa teeni lokamein naaya.*' Mathura is different from any other place in all three worlds. The sweet emotion that showers on Barasana – the village of Radha Rani – is not found anywhere else in the Tribhuvan.' The leela of Vrindavan is wonderful.

A journey had been undertaken to Vrindavan. Many people from Gujarat had come in a group – it is possible that Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj was present. A durbar (assembly) was going on. Many people were seated there. Suddenly an uneducated villager from Vraja came into the hall, carrying a bundle on his

head. He lowered the bundle and put it on the floor. He stood there, resting his chin on his stick. He was a Goswami (a title given to a Brahmin) from Nandagaon – the village of Nanda Baba, the father of Shri Krishna. Seeing him, people started to call out in welcome. ‘Jai Gopal, Jai Gopal, Jai Shri Krishna, Gosainji!’

An important *peethaadheeshvara* (Head of a Peeth, a seat of a Deity) Goswami welcomed him, and asked about his background. The man said, ‘Tell me who you are, first.’

‘I am an ananya Goswami,’ said the Peethadhishwar.

‘Oh, you are an ananya Goswami? I am a fananya Goswami,’ said the newcomer.

The man was puzzled. ‘Who is fananya?’ he asked.

‘Who is ananya?’

‘Ananya is one who does not worship anybody except Shri Krishna,’ explained the Goswami. He named some of the other Deities, like the Devi, Shiva, Ganapati, Surya, and others. The visitor said, ‘Look; your brain is filled with rubbish! You know all these names. I don’t even know the names you mention. A fananya is one who does not know any other name but the name of his Ishtadev (chosen form of worship).’

It is written in the Gita:

Ananyaashchintayanto maam ye`janaah paryupaasate`.

(9. 22)

(People who do My upasana and think constantly about Me)

Ananye`naivayoge`na maam dhyayanta upaasate`.

(12. 6)

(Those whose mind is constantly attached to Me in loving worship.)

Ananyache`taah satatam yo maam smarati nityashah.

(8. 14)

(Those whose mind is fixed constantly on Me alone with love.)

The use of the word 'ananya' is such that no object – except the Paramatma – is the subject of a person's thoughts. This is called ananya bhakti. The word *paryupasate`* means that there is no restriction of place. *Paritah upaasate`* means that the Paramatma is everywhere. And, *nityaabhiyuktaanaam* means at all times, in every place – to focus on only our Ishtadev, and no other. This is called ananya bhakti.

Uttamake`asa basa mana maanhee, sapane`hu aana purusha jaga naahee.

Who is an *uttama* (most superior) *pativrataa* (devoted wife)?

A lady who keeps herself safe out of fear of social shame is a pativrata of a low level. A lady who does not even look at any man except her husband because she adheres to Dharma is a pativrata of a middle level. An *uttam pativrata* is a lady who feels that no one, except her husband, is a male.

So, ananya bhakti is like an *uttam pativrata*. The focus is only on the Ishtadev. The bhakta experiences Bhagwan's *poornataa* (wholeness; being complete in Himself). His *vyaapakataa* (His being all-pervading), His *nityataa* (His being eternal), His *avinaashitaa* (His being everlasting), and His *adviteeyataa* (His being non-dual); and remains in anand.

Jignasa: Who should be considered to be a Sadguru?

Samadhan: A person who can give you a *darshana* (vision) of the Paramatma, and enable you to attain the *sthit*i (state) that he experiences, should be considered to be a Sadguru. That means a Sadguru is one who takes you to the *braahmeesthiti* (the state of the Brahman) and makes you experience the *sat* (pure existence).

The mother and father are also Gurus, because you get your body from them. Your father's elder and younger brothers are also your Gurus because they are your elders. The teachers who teach you at school – at Gurukul – are also your Gurus because they give you education. In a way, a husband and wife are each other's Gurus, because each gives anand to the other. So, they are mutual Gurus of anand. Teachers and students are Gurus of knowledge, and parents are Gurus who give birth to the body.

However, the one who takes you from the *ane`kataa* (multiplicity) to *e`kataa* (Oneness), from *asatya* (the false) to *Satya* (the Truth), from *agnaana* (ignorance) to Gnan, from *dukha* to Paramanand, and gives you the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) that you are not a transient existence, you are your Atma incarnate, is a Sadguru. Actually, according to the Dharma Shastras if someone teaches you even one letter, he is a Guru, and you should be careful that you never insult or disdain him in life.

E`kaaksharapadaataaram yo gurorvamanyate`.

You should never show disrespect to anyone who is your senior. If you learn with *shraddhaa* (faith) your learning will be fruitful; it will not be fruitful if you insult your Guru who gives you knowledge.

When this is the case about respecting even ordinary Gurus, what can be said about the reverence we have for the Sadguru who gives us the sakshatkara of the *avinaashee* (everlasting), *sarvavyaapee* (all-pervading), *sadghana* (filled with pure existence), *chidghana* (filled with pure consciousness), *aanandaghana* (filled with pure joy) *paramaananda svaroop*a (the essence of pure joy)?

Jignasa: Pease give us the *upade'sha* (teaching) by which we get *bhalaayee* (good fortune; benefits in life).

Samadhan: Meaning, what have I done up till now?! My brother, you have poured water over everything I have said!

A gentleman listened to the Ramayana for a month, with great interest. He wept, he laughed, and he did *pranaama* (bowed down), and he praised the *kathaa* (discourses). When the katha was completed he went to the Vyasaji (the person who did the katha) and said, 'Maharaj, I understood the whole Ramayana. I understood everything thoroughly, but there is only one thing that I did not understand. Please tell me about this.'

Vyasaji asked, 'what did you not understand, my brother?'

The man said, 'was Sitaji Rama's wife or was she actually Ravana's wife? This is the point I did not understand.'

Therefore, my brother, all of these – you ask questions, I give answers, you read the Gita, the Bhagwat, the Brahma Sutras, the Upanishads, etc – all these contain teachings that are beneficial for you.

Raja Pratardan asked Indra – this story is given in the Kaushitaki Upanishad. He had gone to Swarga to help the Devtas. When the Devtas won the war Indra told Raja Pratardan to ask for a boon. Pratardan said, 'Maharaj, I don't know what is good and what is bad, what is Satya (a truth that can never be negated) and what is *asatya* (false, transient). I don't have Gnan about this. How can I ask for something unless I have adequate Gnan? I may ask for the wrong thing.'

Kardam Rishi had asked for an excellent bride for himself. Two tears of *kripaa* (compassion) fell from Bhagwan's eyes. 'I came to give him a *varadaana* (boon) and he is asking for a bride,' He thought.

Bhagwan said, 'Very well, My brother, your wish will be fulfilled. You will get a bride. Adi Samrat Svayambhuva Manu's daughter will be your bride. However,

My varadaan is not completed with this. It will be fulfilled when I come to you as your son.’ Bhagwan came as Kapildev.

Therefore, Pratardan said, ‘I don’t know what I should ask for; how can I ask?’

Indra said, ‘My brother, you have done me a great favor. You uplifted me, embellished me, and gave me honor. I am obliged to give something to you.’

Pratardan said, ‘I ask for this varadaan:

Yade`va hitatamam tade`va no brahi.

Please tell me that, which is *hitatama* (of the greatest benefit) for me.’

Indra said, ‘Look, the Gnan that is of the *parama* (greatest) hitatam is – *maame`va vijaaneehi* – know me. Know what I am.’

‘Oh Maharaj, you are before me – you are here as I see you – how am I to know you?’

‘No. *Praanoasmi pragnaatmaa* – *praana* (life breath) and *pragnaa* (right intellect) are both my *upadhi* (superimpositions connected to me). So are *karma* (actions) and *buddhi* (the intellect). The prana remains awake, the buddhi goes to sleep. The prana is blocked, the buddhi remains awake. And, the “I” that is the *saakshee* (witness) of both is the *svayamprakaasha* (self-effulgent) *adhishtaana* (substratum) which is ‘I’ – *maame`va vijaaneehi*. And you are what I am – *ayamaatmaa brahma*. I am the Atma that is the Brahman. Know me and know your Self, and know the oneness of both. No *agnaana* (ignorance about the Atma) should remain in your life. *Mrityu* (death) should not be there for you.’

The fruit of obtaining the highest Gnan is that you become *abhaya* (free of fear) in this very life. This is not about Narak-Swarga; you will certainly be free of that fear. In this very life – *abhayam pratishthaam vindate`* – become *nirbhaya* (fearless) *nirdvandva* (free of doubts). May you obtain the *padavee* (status) of abhay, like Raja Janak.’

Abhyam abhayam vai janaka praapnosi.

The other point is to get the *vignaana* (acquired Gnan) of all from the Gnan of one – the highest learning. You obtain knowledge about one, and know about everything. The Chandogya Upanishad has explained this as Gnan about iron, Gnan about gold, Gnan about clay, etc. All the *kaarya* (effects created by actions) are mere names. The fact is that the Paramatma is the only Sat (Pure existence).

The third point about this is the *saamarthya* (ability; competence) for *sarvadyaaga* (giving up everything). We can give up any object, person, or condition, because they are *drishya* (perceived; separate from the one who perceives). They come and go; they are *mithyaa* (transient; a relative truth). Why should there be any hesitation in giving them up? Therefore, my brother, the greatest *hita* (benefit) is the *bodha* (comprehensive understanding) of our own *svaroopa* (essence; true form).

There are some *dosha* (faults) in our life, in our *antahkarana* (subtle body or fourfold mind, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality). If our life is ruled by Dharma we will not incur *paapa* (sin). If it is ruled by Bhakti for the Ishwara we will be free of *raaga-dve'sha* (attachment-aversion). If *yogaabhyasa* (the practice of Yoga) rules our life the *vikshe'pa* (frenzy) in our life will be quieted. And, if we have *pre'ma* (love) for Bhagwan we will obtain Him.

For this, the most important thing is that our life should be linked with Bhagwan. Keep chanting His name as you walk, move around, get up, sit down, and continue with your routine activities. Keep thinking of Him. Work with the thought that Bhagwan sees the work you are doing.

I used to work at one place. There was a person who was my senior. Whenever I did some work I would think, 'What will he think of the work I am doing, when he comes to know of it?' If there is someone you have great love for, a person who is your genuine well-wisher – it may be your mother, father, or Guru – then, do everything with the thought, 'What will they think of this action of mine?'

So, work to please the Ishwara, continue to take His name, let your life be linked with Him.

The answer to the question is actually something else. The meaning of this question is that at the conclusion of this question-answer session I should tell you something that I feel will be of benefit for you.

Well, everything I have spoken of is of your benefit. It made me happy to see your interest. You come here to listen, leaving your business and work. I don't know how much more comfortable you would be at your own home, but you come here, and get anand from the talks. You don't look at each other or talk among yourselves; there is no restlessness in you. You don't doze off; you listen attentively. You sit at a lower level and make me sit at a higher level. It is your magnanimity that you give respect to me.

As for me, I have great prema for Brahmachari Shri Nityabodhaji Chaitanya – he knows the prema he has and I know the prema I have. Sometimes a person has a mistaken impression about someone having great prema for him, but we always know about the prema we have; we have that knowledge. So, I have great prema for him. I came here at his insistence, because of his prema. Coming here I saw your prema for Satsang (spiritual discourses). You do Satsang, listen to discourses on the Upanishads, Gita, the Brahma Sutras, the teachings of Ramana Maharshi and other Saints (Mahatmas). You do *chintana* (give deep thought) on the things you hear. This is your good fortune. Brahmachariji forced me to come here, otherwise I may not have come. So if you want to thank me, please thank Brahmachari Nityabodha Chaitanya. To thank him means to respect him.

The best thing is that you make Satsang a habit. Take Bhagwan's name, do puja, and do *shravana* (listen to and grasp the purport of spiritual discourses) of the Upanishads, the Gita, the Bhagwat, etc. Listen to the *upade'sha* (teachings) of the Saints. This shravan will gradually take you to your true bhalaayi. My first response was a little sarcastic; this answer is that may prema for Satsang arise in your life.

Om Shantih Shantih Shantaih